



WE MEET AGAIN

The industry gets back together at Merchandise World **P10**



CELEBRATING THE BEST
THE BPMA AWARDS RETURN **P16**



DO THE RIGHT THING
ACCEPTING THE SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGE – **P24**

FIGHTING FIT GET YOUR BUSINESS INTO SHAPE – **P30**

BPMA GOLF DAY

Join the BPMA and fellow industry golfers at the
Annual Golf Day on Wednesday 15th June 2022



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

Tee off!

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

➤ Book your place today

Contact us via events@bpma.co.uk to book in your teams and tickets. Bookings must be received by 31st May 2022.

£130+vat per person or a team of 4 for £500+vat for BPMA members
Non BPMA members £155+vat per person or a team of 4 for £550+vat



Contents

MAY/JUNE 2022

4 News

Need to know information for the industry

8 Ask Clive

Step into film

10 Merchandise World review

Sent to Coventry and we love it

16 BPMA awards

Celebrating the industry's success

20 Marketing winners

Merchandise gives a masterclass

24 Make the change

Accepting the sustainability challenge

29 Education

Get the skills you need

30 Business planning

Get into shape for turbulent times

33 Cybersecurity

Practical steps

34 Briman voice

Badger Design

36 Technology

Charging just got faster

39 Marketing

Don't stand still

41 BPMA news

New members and events

42 Roving Robey

The BPMA's membership manager is on the road

WELCOME



Welcome to our latest issue where we focus on our sustainable future; a topic at the top of most organisations' agenda in one form or another. As an industry often celebrated and challenged in equal

measure on the true sustainability of products. As the whole world moves to net zero and carbon neutral stances on production and ongoing activity, the reality is many are still struggling to get to these ideals and the path to betterment is a complex one.

What does this mean for the promotional merchandise industry? Under pressure to deliver the products and solutions many are looking for, it is very clear from the other end user groups

the BPMA is involved in that the supply chain has gaps in its understanding and ability to carry the sustainable methods end to end, particularly when it comes to events. And of course, price is affecting every decision. The shift here is the value vs price conversation – the hardest one to have and necessary to further these goals. It is clear we have the solutions and by improving the quality of our conversations to bring a wider understanding of what the industry can deliver is imperative.

At the time of going to press, the war in Ukraine was still raging. Our industry responded to the international calls for support and help with an outpouring of ideas which turned rapidly into fundraising actions. Facing challenges getting aid across borders, the focus has been on donating funds

or goods with a clear route to get to those most in need. Whilst we can't take away the horror or displacement of this war for those affected, we can do what we do best, unite and deliver.

Our next publication, Issue 43 July-August, is focused on Writing Instruments & Stationery. This is your platform to talk about your innovation and products so if you'd like to get involved in the feature, please let us know. If you would like to contribute to the next issue with your news, articles or find out about special features, get in touch with us via editor@productmediamagazine.co.uk. For advertising in the next issue and for opportunities in 2022, please get in touch with Tom Robey at the BPMA.

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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Promotional companies show support for Ukraine

A number of merchandise companies have been moved to raise money for the unfolding humanitarian crisis in Ukraine.

The team at Fluid have decided to fundraise internally for the Choose Love Ukraine Crisis appeal.

As a B Corp, Fluid and its futures group are always looking for ways to make meaningful contributions to the wider community and give back to projects that benefit others. The Choose Love Ukraine Crisis Appeal supports projects that are providing vital aid and services to those still in and fleeing the country, including emergency medical care, food, shelter, clothes, legal support, support for the LGBTQIA+ community and mental health support.

The team managed to raise £1,440 in just 14 days with Fluid match funding their team's generosity.

"It's easy to feel helpless in times like this. We wanted to respond quickly to this crisis in what we see as the most effective way right now, by internally fundraising for a charity that is working with local organisations on the ground in Ukraine," said Gemma Richards, marketing manager for Fluid.

Seed specialist Sow Easy has produced 500 sunflower Seedsticks with a target donation of £1,000, all of which will be donated to the DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal.

The sunflower is Ukraine's national flower and a key crop in the country know as the breadbasket of Europe. Donors can purchase the Seedsticks for £2 and they will be sent to them.

Other merchandise companies undertaking activity for Ukraine include CHX Products, Premier Print & Promotions and Prominate.

New structure and capital investment at Laltex

Laltex Group has re-structured its sales team with the introduction of a divisional head for each promo department to help drive business forward for their customers.

The appointments, who have years of experience gained in their respective promotional fields, are Chris Nelson (Laltex Promo) Amber Houghton (Pencom), Rachel Salisbury (Bags HQ) and Emma Conway (Source-It).

To communicate the latest news, products and services in the most effective way, Laltex is introducing a new account manager role. Dan Richardson (Laltex Promo) and Lucy Cooper (Pencom) will continue to manage accounts within their specialist field and will be joined by Dan Nelson from the Bags HQ team once he has completed his training.

Newly appointed sales director, Andrew Williams will oversee sales across the group. He has been Pencom's director since its launch in 2010 and will work with managing director, Neil Horner to mentor the sales team and develop new projects.

Laltex has also continued to roll out its investment plans in both administration and print capacities to include system improvements and investment in production facilities.

The online Laltex Trade portal has been enhanced with a brand new marketing hub. This end-user-friendly platform is packed full of marketing content for customers to share including e-shot templates, social media content, imagery and more.

The purchase of several new machines means a significant boost to the in-house branding options that Laltex can offer. Greater control, quicker lead-times and

more choice for their customers are just a few of the reasons behind this investment decision.

Machinery investment includes a market leading full colour drinkware machine; auto pen printing machine; carousel bag printers, a large format digital printing machine, and a garment dryer.

New embroidery machines are also planned.



Desktop Ideas hits the fairways with leading golf tools from Pitchfix

As conventional working practices are returning there is huge interest in brands hosting corporate golf days, which is great news for promo suppliers and suppliers.

Golf equipment manufacturers are reporting record sales and are struggling to cope with demand, according to Matt Pluckrose, managing director of Desktop Ideas.

The company helped the Pitchfix brand of golf tools re-enter the UK promo market last year, and a new client presentation is now available to help promote the range to end-users considering refreshing their golf ranges or organising corporate golf events.

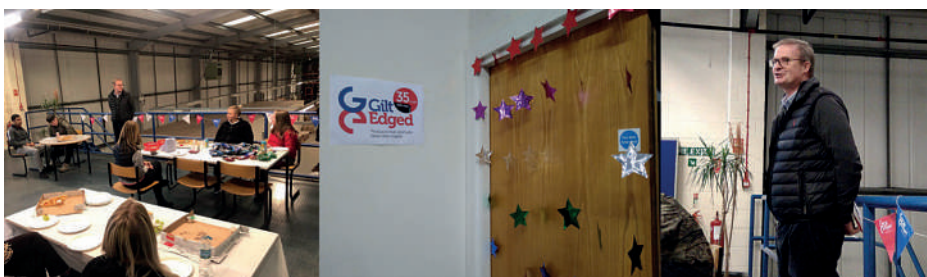
Golf gift packs are once again proving very popular across the world. Golfers are traditionally very choosy about

the nature and quality of golf gifts, and after supplying more than five million tools globally, Pitchfix is a brand that is recognised by golfers for quality and golf authenticity.

"As a golfer myself, I know the tools are impeccable for promoting customer brands, high quality, desirable and reliable" said Pluckrose. "As a supplier of promotional ideas, the gift packs are as good as it gets, they look great, are flexible for any budget and golfers love to receive them."

The BPMA's Golf Day takes place on 15 June. To book tickets, email events@bpma.co.uk.





Gilt Edged Promotions celebrates 35 years back together

Northampton distributor Gilt Edged Promotions has celebrated its 35th business anniversary.

The company has grown from humble beginnings in a home garage in 1986 to a 37,500 square foot office and factory space in Moulton Park, today. Its product range has grown from diaries to a wider offering including notebooks, and calendars.

Managing director Jonathan Cook said: "We work tirelessly to provide high quality and great service to all our customers. We are proud to have done this for 35 years now and are excited for what lies ahead for Gilt Edged."

The business celebrated its anniversary with a lunch party for all staff, marking the first occasion that the whole team was back in one place after nearly two years due to the pandemic.

Sales director Natalie Eichmann said: "The last two years have brought many challenges. From lockdowns and working from home to Brexit, we're proud of how our team have faced issues head on and supported the business. Our industry hasn't had it easy, with material shortages and delivery delays having a huge impact. We've adapted to overcome these challenges and pride ourselves on what we have achieved."

Familiar face returns supply side at Impression Europe

Impression Europe has appointed Sofia Montero as sales and marketing manager as it looks to develop its service levels and commitment to distributors.

Montero is excited at the prospect of her new role which marks a return to the supplier side of the business after recently having worked for distributors.

"I am delighted to be joining such a well-respected supplier in the industry. I have the privilege to build on truly strong foundations and I'm very much looking forward to working with the team and connecting with distributors, old and new," she said.

Impression Europe director, Josh Stephenson added: "Impression Europe is delighted to welcome Sofia as our new sales and marketing manager. With her engaging personality, experience and level of expertise, the opportunity to bring Sofia to our team could not be missed. Over the past two years we have invested significantly in our website and infrastructure, including the opening of our new UK warehouse. Sofia will give our customers the personal assistance they deserve and it makes Impression Europe's level of service and commitment to distributors one of the very best in the industry."



New look for merchandise agency Nadel

Branded merchandise agency, Jack Nadel International, has rebranded as Nadel to reflect the evolution from promotional marketing company to a complete, in-house agency of talent and brand promotion.

"The world is changing and we're positioned not only to stay ahead but truly bend the industry into what is always needed to become. Our elevated brand, new headquarters, and positioning is just the beginning of our vision," said

Debbie Abergel, Nadel's chief strategy officer.

Headquartered in Los Angeles with offices around the world, Nadel was one of the first companies in the world to focus exclusively on branded merchandise.

Since its founding in 1953, it has expanded into custom product development, digital storefronts, fulfilment, and global distribution. Its client roster includes names such as Meta,

Netflix, and Tesla.

LA branding agency Ludlow Kingsley was tasked with delivering a refined and re-energised look to help Nadel stand out in an increasingly competitive field.

"The space of branded merchandise stands at a crossroads, our eyes are focused on a future that meets our internal beliefs and pushes past boundaries. Made with Nadel never held more promise than it does at this moment" Abergel added.

PSI cancels again and looks ahead to traditional slot



PSI has cancelled the latest rescheduled version of the show due to difficulties in securing a full line up of exhibitors and visitors.

The show was due to take place in April, but will now return to its traditional slot at the start of the business year from 2023.

The decision follows close consultations with exhibitors and partners of the major European trade show for promotional products. It will now take place on 10-12 January 2023.

Organiser RX Austria & Germany said that the high share of international visitors at the event, along with the industry's generally cautious attitude, have led to the show moving back to its pole position in January 2023.

About 90 countries are usually represented among the visitors to the PSI Show in Düsseldorf.

Like many trade shows and live events, recent editions of PSI were affected by the pandemic.

The most recent 2022 edition was postponed from its January slot due to a surge in infections and was rescheduled for 26-28 April. The January 2021 show was postponed until May last year but, was also cancelled and became an online event.

Petra Lassahn, the director of PSI, said: "In the current situation enabling a successful event for our exhibitors is especially important to us. And considering how important it is to secure the presence of a full line-up of national and international brands along with visitors from around the world we are unable to do that at this time. The PSI trade show is one of the most important industry trade shows worldwide, and we will once again live up to that standard in 2023."

She added: "Our main concern is to support the players in the promotional products industry, using any means at our disposal, as they set out to generate business again, strengthen their networks and stay in touch with each other – nationally as well as internationally."

The 2023 show will take place at the Messe Dusseldorf. More information can be found at psi-messe.com.



More print options at FaberExposize UK and Northern Flags

FaberExposize UK and sister company Northern Flags have installed a new Jeti Tauro H3300 printer as the firm expands further into UV rigid and roll to roll products.

This is done alongside the recent dye sublimation expansion with the new Agfa Avinci that arrived in December bringing a total of three high capacity dye sublimation machines. The new Jeti Tauro machinery allows Faber Exposize UK to increase its in-house capabilities to cater to the growing demand for 'just in time' production.

The Jeti Tauro H3300 was a challenge as the enormous body of the printer, its components, and the logistics equipment had to be transported via four articulated lorries. It is the fastest wide format printer purchased by FaberExposize UK and Northern Flags with up to 453m² an hour output.

Iain Clasper-Cotte, managing director of Faber Exposize said: "This is the 10th wide format printer we have invested in over the past six years and is undoubtedly the fastest. We already operated two Annapurna UV printers but as we have grown our rigid and vinyl business through Covid when the demand for fabric collapsed, we needed some extra firepower to keep up with our expansion and the demand for environmentally friendly substrates."

Over the past year, the company has been recognised for its 'Action Now' planet-saving initiative which supports businesses in the event, construction, retail, and exhibition sectors in their transition to environmentally friendly display solutions.

CEG authorised for massage device

CEG Collection has been appointed an authorised reseller for wellness tech company Therabody, producer of massage device the Theragun.

Trish Curtis, marketing director said: "We have noted over the past few years that gifting in the workplace wellbeing sector is a key area of growth and so the opportunity to sell this premium high quality item into the distributor channel with laser engraved co-branding is very exciting."

Curtis added that the Theragun Mini is well suited to this market as a desirable entry level offering that could be used for staff incentives, reward schemes, employee onboarding packs, and WFH gifts.

The Minis can be laser engraved with a company logo and can be individually personalised.



Orb brings sustainable products to Glasgow

Distributor Orb Group recently held its first product showcase since the pandemic at Glasgow's Crowne Plaza Hotel with a focus on sustainable products.

In attendance were many of Orb Group's clients and prospects to learn about eco-friendly promotional products.

Mike Smith, the managing director of Orb Group, said: "It was wonderful to see the return of face-to-face business. It was certainly one of the most commented upon topics by our customers. It is a real sign that business is back with so many customers attending the show to get ideas for their promotional merchandise requirements for the coming year."

Orb Group aims to work closely with industry professionals who offer sustainable products. Each company that took part in the show provided an incredible sustainable range and advised attendees on how to get the best out of eco-friendly promotional merchandise.



LSi expands team as bounce back continues

After an excellent sales start to 2022 and exceeding pre-Covid levels, LSi has taken on an extra three members of staff, increasing the sales team to ten.

Dom Moore and George Dixon have both joined the team as sales executives. They will be looking after their own customer base whilst ensuring Helen Berry's customers are well looked after while she is on maternity leave.

Phil Taylor, an experienced warehouse supervisor joins an ever-expanding team within LSi's own in-house fulfilment and distribution centre. Throughout the pandemic, LSi was able to maximise the benefit of its own storage and fulfilment services, by offering clients a totally vertical service from order through to home deliveries for their clients.

With the recent win of three major corporate schemes to be held and distributed, the team is set to expand further as more and more clients get back to normality and require a secure means of storage and distribution for their gifts.

Lloyd Simpson, managing director, said: "These appointments are necessary to continue on our path for growth. I am extremely pleased that we have been able to navigate through the recent pandemic with a mixture of hard work, patience and loyalty from every member of staff. By utilising the furlough system, we were able to retain all our 30 staff and people slotted back into their roles, allowing us to bounce back significantly after 18 months of uncertainty."



Polish advertising show Remadays returns

The 17th edition of the Advertising and Printing Trade Fair Remadays 2022 attracted over 10,000 visitors and 483 exhibitors to the PTAK Warsaw Exhibition Centre.

Exhibitors presented their offer in 11 trade fair sectors, such as: Gifts World, Textile Zone, Packaging Materials, Photo Creation, POS & Display, Lighting Systems, Outdoor Advertising, Event Show, Technology Park, Printing House IT & e-Solution.

The series of lectures of the annual RemaCongress was an opportunity to broaden knowledge, increase competence and learn about current issues of the industry and business.

Dates for next year's show have yet to be released but more information can be found at remadays.com.

INTRODUCING DTF

Direct to film printing offers another tool in the decorator's armoury, says **Clive Allcott**



The printing industry has experienced rapid growth in recent times with the advent of DTG (direct to garment) printing, however there is a new kid on the block DTF (direct to film)

DTF offers simplicity, convenience, consistency, digital colour spectrum as well as being flexible, soft feel and washable as a branding solution.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS

DTF is a process that transfers prints on to fabric or other substrates using a heat-press mechanism, in essence a modern-day transfer print.

WHAT IS DTF?

As the name suggests, a direct-to-film print allows you to print a design on a film and transfer it directly to the intended surface, such as fabric. The key reason why DTF is gaining prominence is the freedom it gives you to choose almost any surface for printing.

The DTF printer technology can allow



you to print easily on cotton, polyester, synthetic, or silk without any trouble. Plus, DTF printers can work on dark coloured garments without the need for a pre-treatment. That said it is not here to replace DTG as there are markets for both.

In fact, at Direct Textiles and Bags we have been using this process in our transfer department over the past 15 months but with the added benefit of using paper rather than film so in essence DTP (direct to paper). transSMART DTP offers a totally sustainable way of transfer printing due to water based inks and FSC paper along with all the benefits direct to film offers.

PROS AND CONS OF PRINTER DTF

So, is it a flash in the pan or exceptional piece of technological advancement in the printing industry?

PROS

- It does not require any pre-treatment
- You can use it on almost any material or fabric
- Excellent colour reproduction
- Flexibility and soft feel transfer
- Affordable branding
- Multi positional branding solutions

CONS

- The printed area is slightly more noticeable to the touch compared to screen printing
- Needs secondary application of heat and pressure to brand.

IN CONCLUSION

The textile industry predicts substantial growth for DTF in years to come as it's an efficient and affordable branding solution.

Ask your decorator for more information about direct to film or direct to paper printing.

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GETTING DOWN TO *business*

Merchandise World was back to Coventry for the first time since 2020 and the industry was keen to get back to some sense of normality

After several false dawns, the promotional merchandise industry did get back together, as promised, in its spiritual home of Coventry.

A lot has changed since the last meeting of the sector's movers and shakers, not least the name of the venue which now goes under the title of the CBS Arena.

One thing that hasn't changed is the enthusiasm to get business done. Any concerns anyone may have had about whether the industry was ready for a major event proved completely unfounded during April's triumphant show.

On the face of it, things could have been tricky as the show had to move from its original January slot to the only other available dates, immediately before the Easter bank holiday weekend. With Covid cases still worryingly high, exhibitors and show organisers could not be certain if the distributor visitors would arrive in numbers.

However, as soon as the doors opened it was clear that the pull of seeing 145 exhibitors with a wide range of products overrode any apprehensions from those who beat a path to the door.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

In some ways, it was back to business as usual, with the return of the fortifying Merchandise World free breakfast preparing the arrivals for the show ahead. It was



clear that people were delighted to see each other again and a real buzz could be felt throughout the show.

The Brimran treasure hunt was back again with visitors incentivised to find out more about British made merchandise by visiting member stands and hearing how buying from a home producer can tick a lot of boxes from boosting the economy and reducing carbon counts, to easing supply chain headaches.

But there was plenty that was new as well. The exhibition featured 12 suppliers new to the show and more than



100 of the exhibitors had environmentally friendly products in their range. The move towards sustainable products is clear and the ECO World also proved a popular stand for discovering new ideas.

Over the course of the two days, 896 quality distributor visitors streamed through



the door and the show hall remained busy right up until it closed at 3pm on day two.

HAPPY TO BE BACK

Merchandise World show organiser, Ella Long said: "Watching people so happy to be together again, and to see old and new relationships developing is always rewarding. The industry is back together, and we were pleased to hear people telling us during, and at the end of the show how positive it has made them feel and of the many benefits they had gained from coming."

Sourcing City chairman, David Long, added: "I'm delighted with the visitor numbers which are even better than we expected. Exhibitors reported a constant flow of quality visitors and were able to have meaningful conversations with people who had made time to come out of the office because they were looking for innovative ideas for

their campaigns. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone again in September."

Angela Wagstaff, BPMA president said: "It was a good show and good to be back among familiar faces. It feels as if life is getting back to normal and our industry can get back to business."

INNOVATIVE IDEAS

There was plenty of innovation on offer. Birmingham-based Prime Time had a smart LED backpack that could turn the wearer into a dynamic walking advertising hoarding for a brand, or allow them to display their own content

through a paired smartphone app.

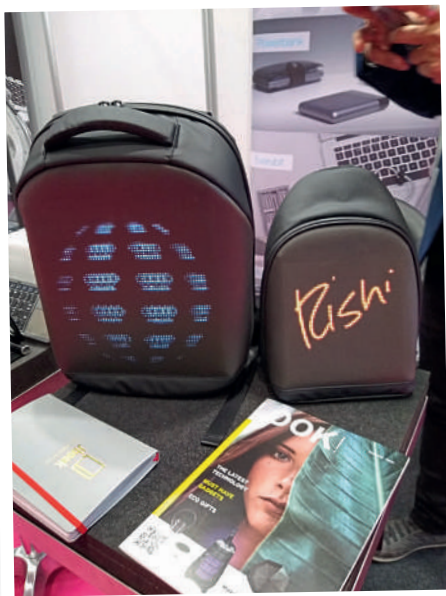
Alan Stride, managing director of Premier Brands, which had its own innovative products on display, said the industry seemed to be on the up again.

"We've recently had our three best days since Covid. It has been tough of late and it still is but it's getting better. Technology and drinkware are doing well."

The company, which offers products such as the E-Coffee cup, Leuchtturm 1917 notebooks, and the Circular and Co cup which is made from recycled coffee cups, notes a desire from customers for more retail standard products.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

Mark Alderson, managing director of First Editions said that the show was a welcome return to doing business face to face, something that he had missed. However,





he warned that challenges remained for the industry as it looked to grow again.

"We are facing quite a few challenges from raw materials to inflation and staff – half a million people have left industry. But I remain optimistic and people are more realistic about things like price rises. It is the first time I can remember that people are not complaining about them," he said.

Other companies were focused on the here and now of looking for that one winning connection.

Headwear specialists Product Zone were hoping to be on winning form bringing a replica of the FA Cup to the current home of the 1987 cup winners Coventry. The company supplies many football clubs as well as charities, supermarkets, fast food players and distributors.

Speaking at the show, director Tony Marks



Merchandise World draw delights visitors

When Merchandise World was forced to move its date, the BPMA and Sourcing City dreamt up a new way to thank visitors joining the show in April. The Merchandise World Magnificent Prize Draw was launched with an array of cash and electronic goodies to be won on day two of the show. Visitors were prompted to register for the draw via posters and promotional materials all over the venue. There was just one big ask – entrants had to be at the show at the time of the draw on 14th April otherwise their place was forfeit.

Attracting a lot of interest before the show, the BPMA who handled the draw in conjunction with Sourcing City, noted nearly 100 early enquiries about the draw which was only open between 13th and midday on 14th April. Open to all registered Merchandise World visitors, entrants were invited to scan a QR to enter the draw and just under 200 entries were received by the midday deadline on day two of the show, representing nearly a quarter of visitors to the show.

Prizes consisted of £1,000, £500 and £250 in cash plus a Nintendo Switch and an iPad. Each person drawn was asked to join the BPMA and Sourcing City team in ECO World to choose a mystery box and claim the prize inside. With no way of knowing which box held which prize, it really was the luck of the draw.

The five lucky winners drawn were David Marie of Midas Promotions, Angela Wagstaff founder of Allwag, Matt Sadler at Levelup Print, Jackie Lengenegger of Geiger, and Ebun Agentunubi at Promo2u. Winners were invited in order of the draw to claim their prizes; David bagged £250 in cash and Angela Wagstaff landed the whopping £1,000 prize. Matt was delighted with his iPad and Jackie was going to be popular at home with a Nintendo Switch. Ebun, a newcomer to the industry via the Kickstart scheme, was over the moon with her £500 cash prize.

Angela Wagstaff, who is also President of the BPMA, donated her £1,000 prize money to the BPMA nominated charity, the Alzheimer's Society and visited Chairman Haydn Willetts on the midocean stand to present him with the golden envelope straight after the draw. The BPMA has donated this money to the charity which takes their total donations this year to over £1,500.

Congratulations to all the winners who kicked off their Easter weekends in style.



said: "It's going well for us, and it only takes one good meeting to make it worthwhile, which is why you have to be here."

SUSTAINABLE SHOW

Sustainability was the watchword of the show with so many companies using it as the theme for their stands, their product ranges, and their business presentation.

Simon Adam, managing director of WCM+A said that the company had saved 57 tons of carbon and planted 6,495 trees since it launched its Sustainable British Manufacturing initiative in January.

"It's all at no cost to anyone and we're doing it because we believe in it. This has historically been a landfill industry and it doesn't need to be like that," he said.

The company has been a frontrunner in this area getting rid of 1.5 million plastic bags a year by switching to more sustainable packaging for its badges.

Billy Hussain, director of Alvastone, and a member of the BPMA, said Merchandise World was increasingly a place that the industry came together as a community and not just for business.

"During the pandemic we just haven't been seeing people face to face, but after



the show we have a number of businesses that want us to come in and see them. For clothing, you need be able to touch the garment to really appreciate it."

Like many exhibitors, he noted a demand for sustainable products and is introducing more 100% recycled polyester.

Stormtech is also harnessing a more sustainable approach with its Pure Earth range which encompasses long lasting quality and responsible supply chains with a socially responsible approach and an increased use of recycled materials.

Sales director Andrew Kouroushi said this had seen the company grow in the past two years despite the pandemic.

"We had stock when others didn't and we have seen a lot of companies switch towards workwear for their staff or as high-quality gifts to thank them for their efforts," he said.

At the end of two hectic days of networking, selling, looking for inspiration, and reconnecting with peers, the feeling was that this was an event that did the sector proud and pointed towards hopefully better times.



Let's do it again

If you didn't manage to get to Coventry Merchandise World, look out for the next show.

These are the dates for your diary:

Wednesday 14th September 2022 - Marshall Arena, Milton Keynes

Wednesday 25th & Thursday 26th January 2023 - CBS Arena, Coventry

Product winners get their trophies

Senator's Evoxx pen was a Gold Eco Product winner



Bagco picked up the Eco Product of the Year Platinum



Juniper also doubled up for its bags and notebooks



It was Platinum in the Award & Gifting category for Eat My Logo



Xindao picked up a brace of Silvers



First Impressions took Platinum in Drinkware



Reflects' Thermomug was a Silver winner



Premier Impressions struck Gold in Drinkware



The Mood range from Snap picked up Gold in Award & Gifting



United Brands of Scandinavia won Platinum



It was Gold and Platinum for Desktop Ideas



Jutebag was another double winner



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BPMA awards



CELEBRATING OUR INDUSTRY

The BPMA awards were back big time as the promotional merchandise sector gathered once more to salute the best of the best



The last time we gathered for the BPMA Awards, it was February 2020. Little did we know we would not be meeting again to celebrate the annual BPMA Awards until April 2022. But meet we did and with a bang!

Read on to hear more about the winners, the evening, the host, and of course the glittering array of the industry's finest kicking up their heels.

Starting the evening with a drinks reception, fresh from Day 1 of Merchandise World guests from across the promotional merchandise industry gathered to catch up with friends and colleagues. During the drinks reception, guests had a further reminder of the BPMA Product Awards which were released in January across eight categories from exhibiting suppliers.

Ferrari start-up

Host for the evening Nick Ferrari of LBC Radio and Farage-bashing fame, was welcomed by BPMA Chairman Haydn Willetts following his inaugural address to the industry at the dinner, held at the CBS Arena in Coventry on 13 April.

The BPMA Awards are presented to member suppliers and distributors

following a vote placed by each member. Originally due to take place in late January, the Awards voting this year was extended to 31 January after the event was moved to April this year.

Well-supported by sponsors from across the industry; the BPMA Awards this year were a long awaited chance to recognise and applaud the journey everyone has been on since February 2020.

The drinks reception was sponsored by R&D specialists, CBTax, category sponsors were Fluid, Geiger, Listawood, Preseli, DTB, PF Concept and Briman. Crystal Gallery generously provided the trophies and the Briman trophy by WCM+A, melt in the mouth surprises were supplied by The Sweet People with the winner's fizz kindly sponsored by midocean.

Supplier winners

Starting the evening with the Supplier of the Year up to £2m sponsored by Fluid, the first named finalists were CHX Products, Oldeani, Desktop Ideas and WCM+A with WCM+A landing the winning vote for this category.

Next up was Supplier of the Year £2m+ sponsored by Geiger, a strong line up





Marketing campaign

The Marketing Campaign of the Year was next, with host Nick Ferrari sharing some of the judges' comments before naming this year's winner talked of the innovation and inspiration from every entrant to this category. Judged by a panel of end-user judges, this campaign saw two highly commended entries from Mantis World and LSI.

The winner of this category was Steel City's Mind & Body Boost campaign for their excellent work during 2021, driving exceptional results, new clients and revenues. Look out for our article on this award and to hear more about the winners. (p20)

of finalists made up of Laltex Group, midocean, PF Concept and Xindao waited to hear who landed this Award. Laltex Group were triumphant.

Next up was the Supplier Unsung Hero, a category well-supported with votes across the supplier landscape, finalists Amanda Moody of Xindao and two nominations from WCM+A's Kate Vickerstaff and Ben Forster. A huge round of applause confirmed Amanda Moody of Xindao had landed this coveted accolade from BPMA members.

Distributor winners

The next Awards focused on Distributor of the Year up to £500k sponsored by Preseli with finalists Manic Merchandise, BH1 Promotional Merchandise Specialists, Beeline Promotional Products and Ellenell on the edge of their seats; BH1 landed this accolade.

Distributor of the Year up to £2m sponsored by PF Concept, hailed finalists ASP Promotions, Mojo Promotions, Printed4You and Bounce Creative. They definitely had theirs as Mojo jumped on stage to accept their Award for this category.

Taking a short pause for dinner, the room was buzzing with excitement for the final awards of the evening. Listawood, sponsoring the Distributor of the Year £2-5m category, were on stage as finalist names Allwag Promotions, Premier, LSI and Pinksheep waited to hear who had won. Allwag Promotions landed this category to cheers and applause.

With the final Distributor of the Year Award over £5m, contenders Fluid, Geiger, Total Merchandise and 4imprint waited nervously for the gold envelope to reveal Fluid as this year's winner.



Briman winner

Last Award of the evening was the Briman Award which was presented after a two-stage judging process by Briman members looking for those who had promoted British made promotional products. Navillus Branded Merchandise walked away with this British-made accolade from the Briman members.

The evening concluded with conversation, music, dancing and fun and whilst PM is sure there were a few sore heads for Day 2 of Merchandise World, this fantastic event marked the return to business as usual.





Winners List

- **Supplier of the Year up to £2m, Sponsored by Fluid**
Winner: WCM+A
- **Supplier of the Year £2m+, Sponsored by Geiger**
Winner: Laltex Group
- **Supplier Unsung Hero**
Winner: Amanda Moody, Xindao
- **Distributor of the Year up to £500k, sponsored by Preseli**
Winner: BH1 Promotional Merchandise Specialists
- **Distributor of the Year up to £500k-£2m, sponsored by PF Concept**
Winner: Mojo Promotions
- **Distributor of the Year up to £2m-£5m, sponsored by Listawood**
Winner: Allwag Promotions
- **Distributor of the Year over £5m, sponsored by DTB**
Winner: Fluid
- **Marketing Campaign of the Year**
Winner: Steel City
- **BRIMAN Award**
Winner: Navillus Branded Merchandise



MARKETING MASTERCLASS:

THE 2022 MARKETING CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR

The BPMA award showed how members are promoting themselves and the best in merchandise

The announcement in 2021 of the return of the BPMA Annual Awards presented the chance for those BPMA members to celebrate the fact they had been promoting their socks off... or their bags, bottles, notebooks and more during the pandemic.

An industry that never rests, the entrepreneurial spirit truly kicked in during the further periods of restricted trade in 2021, with many members going above and beyond to keep the promotional message for merchandise alive and kicking.

The BPMA gathered a crack team of end user judges for this category – the only judged category for the Awards and welcomed Wendy Carter, head of the Incentive & Motivation Awards and IMA board director, Mark Burgess, commercial director at VCG PromoRisk and Jody Bratley, general manager at The Institute of Promotional Marketing.

The judges set about assessing the high level of entries submitted for this year's Marketing Campaign of the Year and over two rounds of judging and debate, awarded

BPMA Marketing Campaign of the Year shortlist

an overall winner and sought to highly commend two further entries. Judges looked for creative and commercially savvy approaches that got sound commercial results.

STEEL CITY WINNER

Walking away with the coveted Award was Steel City with their campaign, Mind & Body Boost. Highly commended campaigns were recognised for their impact; Mantis World What's My Impact and LSI's Bounce Back.

Steel City's campaign got under the skin of promotional merchandise linked to mind and body with some jaw dropping activity and results from exposure across multiple channels to deliver promotions with a punch.

“

BPMA MEMBERS WENT ABOVE AND BEYOND
TO KEEP THE PROMOTIONAL MESSAGE FOR
MERCHANDISE ALIVE AND KICKING

Bouncing back after Covid

LSI's 'bounce back' range of merchandise was a collection of its top 15 selling products to remind people of the power of merchandise to excite and motivate.

The company put together handsome mailing packs to be sent to customers and prospects as part of an overall campaign to position itself as a partner that could help others bounce back and galvanize staff behind the efforts to get up to speed again.

LSI got its own team involved in a fun promotional video that highlighted the range of services it offered, and crucially put faces to names in the organisation, from the sales team, to designers and warehouse operatives.

The company continued the bounce back theme with a series of weekly videos to drill down into what it could offer clients.



BPMA marketing award

WORTHY RUNNERS UP

Mantis World's campaign looked at the impact of climate change linked to orders and LSI literally bounced their campaign into the inboxes and social stratosphere.

Judges were incredibly impressed with the effort, creativity and results achieved across all the entrants. They hailed the creative angles taken resulting in purposeful entries with sustainable focus and a wide variety of business generating approaches that took buyer challenges and addressed them.

Judges commented: "These are incredible efforts considering the time they were created – shows how innovative the promotional merchandise industry is."

The judges also made specific note

of the effort to secure clients which demonstrated the industry was not complacent or passive during Covid noting: "These guys got up and did something about building and retaining business with great results."

Entrants were highly commended for delivering creativity and purpose in very different but highly effective ways. Steel City's winning entry harnessed the mood of the moment, and the results showed solid and sustained results that drove business.

Congratulations to all the BPMA members shortlisted for this Award; the quality and overall standard demonstrated what we already know – we're fantastic at promoting merchandise! 



Mind & Body Boost: Steel City Award winning profile

Sheffield based distributor, Steel City, with its distinctive orange branding and lively team placed activity at the heart of its campaign, Mind & Body Boost.

"One of our key organisational objectives is brand recognition and profile raising. One way we do this is through exciting marketing campaigns," it stated.

During the pandemic with the industry being severely hit, Steel City's main revenue of business (exhibitions and events) was cancelled or postponed. However, it was really important that the company maintained a brand presence, so it was remembered when things eventually picked back up. Steel City therefore decided to launch a marketing campaign to support mental and physical health of current and prospective clients. This was two-fold: a B2B virtual fitness challenge and Tik Toks.

The #40X4Challenge not only enabled the company to raise brand awareness and nurture business relationships with key clients, it was able to raise the profile of three amazing local charities: The Children's Hospital Charity, Western Park Cancer Charity and Cavendish Cancer. Steel City was able to spread the message to its business platform through email, blogs and social media. The month long challenge also raised £1,211.25 funding for the charity.

Steel City took on challenges to bring the idea to life: #40X4Challenge a virtual 'Joe Wicks' style month-long charity event during lockdown. Each morning it would broadcast a four-minute workout with four exercises, to help business people feel connected and energised for the day ahead. The TikTok campaign starred MD James Biggin and he created a number of TikToks incorporating branded gifts in a light-hearted way.

"We wanted to engage with our business audience and offer them something of value that would help them to get through a difficult period. This would then provide a memorable touchpoint with our company for when they need to purchase promotional gifts," he said.

THE RESULTS

Among a dizzying array of impressive results, Steel City gained an impressive six-figure uplift in sales via social channels and acquired 34 new clients.



Showing the cost of clothing

Mantis World has a long-standing commitment to demonstrating how its products are made and to transparency in the clothing supply chain.

Its What's My Impact campaign created an impact calculator that showed the true environmental benefit of making sustainable choices.

This includes the water, energy and emissions saved, as well as the pesticides avoided, by choosing organic and sustainable fibres over their conventional counterparts. The handy tool featured on every product page across the Mantis website.



This is not just any membership. This is BPMA membership.

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BPMA membership is subject to application, credit checks, references and BPMA Board approval. To view our terms and conditions, please visit bpma.co.uk.



Make the change

The challenge of sustainability is for everyone to embrace.
How is the merchandise sector doing its bit?

Last year's UN Climate Change Conference, COP 26, held in Glasgow, underlined the scale of the challenge facing humanity, and the need for everybody to play their part.

In recent weeks the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has released its latest reports with the sombre message that it's "now or never" when it comes to taking action to tackle climate change.

Greenhouse gas emissions must peak by 2025, and should be nearly halved this decade, to give the world a chance of limiting future heating to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels.

Alarm bells are ringing, if a little later than they should have been, but the alert has been sounded and governments are responding.

In the UK, the prime minister has seized on the challenge, but also the opportunity surrounding the environmental crisis to speak of a new green industrial revolution where the UK will innovate and lead on clean technologies.

But it is a challenge that cannot simply be achieved from the top down. Every aspect of our lives from work, to travel, leisure, agriculture and manufacture will change, and a thousand points of light will be

required from businesses and organisations large and small.

Everyone has a role, and the good thing for the merchandise sector is that this has been accepted by many of the companies in the sector, not to mention their clients who are crying out for sustainable products.

DITCH THROW AWAYS

The drive is coming through from consumers too, according to research by product development consultancy, biidl, indicating that people are tired of the throw away society.

It found overwhelming support for products that serve a greater purpose, in particular for those which are good for the planet.

The survey explored which product features were most relevant to consumers across the UK and what prices people would be willing to pay, and discovered:

- **74%** want long-lasting products that can be easily repaired.
- **63%** want products that are designed to be recycled.
- **59%** want products made from sustainable materials.

- **58%** want brands to develop products that help consumers reduce their environmental impact.
- **3 in 4** would pay **10.6%** above the average price for a purpose-led product.

DO THE RIGHT THING

The impetus to serve these emerging market needs is obviously commercial, but there are other factors at play, not least the feeling that we all have a part to play.

Many merchandise manufacturers have enviable records in areas such as driving down packaging waste, reusing and recycling materials, using alternative energy sources, and cutting carbon emissions. In some cases, they have been delivering a sustainable message ahead of a market being ready for it.

Companies like Senator have used green electricity in their production processes for





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many years and it has been a frontrunner in developing eco products such as its bio range of pens that are derived from sugar cane, and makes use of recycled plastics in its production.

Briman manufacturers The Sweet People and Eat My Logo have taken great strides in introducing alternatives to plastic packaging.

UK Lanyards proudly claims that its products are air miles free, produced using solar power, and with staff based within eight miles of work with some walking or cycling.

Simon Adam, director of WCMA which produces badges and trophies, said it was important to do the right thing.

"We're in a fortunate position where we can hopefully influence buying choices by highlighting the truth, good and bad, about our sector of the industry. We're the ones who can best develop products made from the more sustainable materials and I believe it's manufacturers like us that should be taking a lead in moving to a circular economy."

COMPANY VALUES

Gemma Richards, marketing manager at Fluid Branding said the company is definitely seeing more requests for sustainable products.

"It's most evident within our tendering processes for new business for large corporate clients. Sustainability is on their horizons, and it's something that we're being asked more and more to showcase and demonstrate commitments and capabilities. It is an essential part of the tendering process now, which is where things have changed."

However, Fluid's drive to

sustainability is also rooted in its status as a BCorp company, which means it is certified to meet rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency.

In practical terms, that includes such initiatives as its Tree with Every Order scheme which aims to plant up to a million trees responsibly as part of its plan to be carbon net zero by 2030. It has already hit 20,000.

The company also linked with the Salvation Army recently to donate excess PPE stock to the charity for use in its care homes.

PRODUCTION PROCESSES

As previously covered in *Product Media*, there are growing concerns about 'greenwashing' – the use of seductive imagery and vague product copy and descriptions to create an impression that a product is sustainable when closer scrutiny reveals that it is not as squeaky clean as suggested.

"There's too much greenwashing going on with products described as eco that have little genuine claim to say that in the first place and people are claiming their products can be recycled where in the real world they simply won't be," says Simon Adam.

To understand how sustainable a product is, buyers need to be cognisant of how it was manufactured and the entire life cycle of the product.

Everything that is produced goes through five main life cycle stages: material extraction, manufacturing, packaging and transportation, use, and end of life. At each of these stages, there are inputs and outputs, flow-throughs, value losses, and potential gains.

Buyers increasingly want to know about all of this. The rise of



Its products must use an eco-friendly void fill solution such as paper, and its

Plastic products have got a bad reputation in recent years, but it is mainly single use products that have been in the crosshairs of legislators through such initiatives as the aforementioned plastic packaging tax.

Made in Britain – although not an environmental standard as such, Made in Britain status is an indicator that goods have not been transported from the other side of the world, as well as demonstrating they are of British manufacture.

madeinbritain.org





The British government and the EU have similar agendas when it comes to getting rid of 'avoidable' plastics. The plastic bag tax is held up as a model of how government intervention can work, reducing consumption of bags by 95% and encouraging the use of alternatives such as paper bags and reusable totes.

Plastic straws, stirrers and cotton buds have already been banned and the plan is to extend the ban to cutlery, plates, cups and balloon sticks where alternative materials can be used.

The direction of travel is clear and as the eco products at the recent Merchandise World show, there are already plenty of options for buyers.

RECYCLED PLASTIC

Plastic itself need not be the complete baddy it is made out to be, if it is used in recycled forms, says Andy Knight, owner of Cornwall-based CHX Products.

The company believes in making high quality promotional merchandise that is environmentally responsible while being mindful of the demands of the industry. It designs, manufactures and prints 100% eco promotional merchandise in its environmentally award-winning factory in Cornwall.

It has made more than 500 million items for customers using 100% recycled plastic sourced from the UK and its products are manufactured and printed using solvent free inks and designed specifically for the promotional merchandise industry.

"Plastic is not a throwaway product, and it shouldn't be. We manufacture enough plastic in the world, to never actually have to produce any more. Fossil fuels are going to run out and are already becoming more and more difficult to extract. There's going to be a point where we have to flip the switch and get moving to more renewables. It's going to happen quickly," says Knight.

CHX's latest range goes one step further with rhipsB, a biodegradable polymer made from 100% waste and recycled products. It biodegrades in compost, landfill and water by being broken down 200 times faster than standard plastic.



MADE TO LAST

Merchandise is increasingly designed with longevity built in, to be both desirable and to fulfil an ongoing need. Products such as reusable coffee cups, cutlery sets and water bottles have in recent years become the preferred option for many consumers looking to reduce their own usage of one-off products.

One of First Editions best-selling products is the award-winning Tritan 'bottle for life', which is packed with eco credentials. Tritan has revolutionised the market for sustainable drinkware, delivering hydration on the go with a sturdy and shatterproof design.

The stylish bottles are UK-made, 100% BPA-free, dishwasher-safe and fitted with an easy-clean, leakproof drinking spout.

BALLOON STICKS

Chesham-based promotional printer, B-Loony launched BalloonGrip to answer the urgent need for an alternative to single use plastic balloon sticks which were to be banned by the EU. The fully patented product made from sustainable raw materials which are fully biodegradable.

The cardboard engineered balloon holder also has a huge advantage over the traditional plastic stick as it can be custom printed for sales promotions with brands or even competitions.



Carbon neutral tech

Carbon neutrality is even coming to tech in the form of recycled materials, natural materials and plastic free packaging in the last few years. Tech specialist Desktop Ideas is now moving to reduce further its carbon footprint.

The journey of reducing the footprint of products covers the manufacturing process, packaging, product materials and transport through the supply chain. Desktop Ideas is independently assessing all new items and many best sellers to quantify the product's foot print in CO₂ grams. For example, the award-winning Mr Bio charge cable is weighing in at 85g CO₂.

Once measured the carbon is offset in climate projects through the Gold Standard projects.

PAPER TIGERS

Adco Products supplies a wide range of recycled products, such as natural coloured wire smart spiral pads, recycled sticky notes and recycled till receipt books, all manufactured on site in the Peak District. The company is a carbon neutral business with a successful recycling programme that achieves a 98% recycle rate on waste produced.

Its Adbox packaging division offers a wide range of standard and bespoke presentation boxes made in the UK. It has added screen printed corrugated presentation boxes and craft covered premium boxes to offer eco-friendly gift packaging.

GROWING BUSINESS

For Sow Easy, the product range comes with a built-in environmental message as it consists of seeds and plant products.

"The beauty of our product range is that each one goes many steps further than being 'sustainable'; our products also aid biodiversity, clean our air, and help mental health wellbeing. We believe that it is these added benefits that are the reason our products are becoming ever-increasingly popular," says Jamie Gray, sales and marketing director.

The best-selling Seedsticks are printed with vegetable and soy ink, made with FSC card and each seeded stick is made from a biodegradable FSC material. On the rare product that does include any limited plastic components, it is reusable and recyclable.

Gray adds: "We're just completing a carbon assessment for 2021 in partnership with Heart of the City, who are training SMEs like us to plan, measure and reduce carbon and are working towards becoming Net Zero by 2025 and our workforce is officially climate positive with the help of Ecologi's worldwide projects. We continue to use solar-energy to help power our factory and offer a vast range of Made in Britain certified products, reducing their carbon footprint considerably." 



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SKILLS MATTER MORE IN 2022

As the Government aims to level up, businesses have to skill up their people, and the BPMA's merchandise specific training can help

Employers across the industry and the UK are all reporting the same thing: talent is hard to find and keep. The job boards are bursting with ads to find the next great sales and account managers, creatives and more. Once those rare talents have been recruited, it's then all hands on deck to inject the information and training to grow the next generation of promotional merchandise professionals.

EMPLOYERS INVEST MORE IN STAFF AND TRAINING

Many suppliers and distributors run internal training programmes with great results, complementing knowledge with industry specific courses such as the BPMA's Trained in Promotional Merchandise (TPM) and Certified in Promotional Merchandise (CPM) to share core knowledge and skills. BPMA courses are only open to BPMA members and with a drive to ensure at least 10% of all staff in membership are qualified, the BPMA has invested heavily in new content and course platforms to fuel the skills race.

BUILDING SKILLS POST-PANDEMIC

The Government is also focussed on building skills across all sectors but with a call from a range of industry bodies including the BPMA, more recognition and investment is needed into Association level courses to complement the Government's Levelling Up agenda. Debates scheduled for the Debating Group at the House of Commons later this year, of which the BPMA is part, will look at the industry-wide challenge to skill up to meet Levelling Up and export targets set by Government.

In a recent letter to Minister for Industry, Lee Rowley MP who is Skills Minister, a collective of industry bodies which included the Advertising Association of which the BPMA is a member, Data & Marketing Association and others pointed to the huge benefits of sector specific training:

- Association courses are employer-

led and can respond dynamically to business needs

- They have a profound reach with SMEs throughout the country, delivering skills programmes that directly contribute to the UK's Levelling Up goals
- They contribute to the wider business economy, supporting companies in other sectors across the UK and abroad

Whilst the Government has placed importance on skills and training with initiatives such as Help to Grow scheme with investment into apprenticeships and schemes such as Kick Start, most businesses report the hurdles to access funding, training and availability of people to take part are off-putting. The Department of Education bootcamps where the majority of Government funding is focused, are not ideally structured to facilitate applications from professional associations, missing vital chances to tap into industry training which can address many important business needs and requirements.

For example, Association courses provide an avenue for adults who want to re-skill or up-skill rapidly without signing up for a more formal and protracted course; they enable those already employed to progress their careers and to access employment opportunities within their sectors, helping to fill rapidly skills shortages in middle and upper levels plus they provide opportunities for people seeking to switch careers. Requesting more discussion and debate between Government departments, we will continue to report on the rise of Association-led education.

CELEBRATING NEWLY QUALIFIED PROMOTIONAL MERCHANDISE PROFESSIONALS

Now with four intakes a year, the BPMA has just started its second intake for TPM and CPM courses. *PM* is delighted to celebrate those whose hard work and efforts paid off to gain new qualifications since the start of the year. Welcoming newcomers and those seeking to upskill in their careers, this year

has seen more suppliers now taking up courses too.

Interested in promotional merchandise industry-tailored qualifications? Visit bpma.co.uk and search Education or email education@bpma.co.uk for more information.

Qualified professionals

Congratulations to all those who have passed their TPM and CPM exams in 2022!

TPM

Rowan Andrews,
Georgia Brookes -
Steel City Marketing

Marc Barbery, Adam
Hicks, Ruby Ho, Laura
Ralph - Fluid Branding

Dan Blakeman -
Mr Bamboo Cup

Damien Crowley-Dynan
- Connect Promotions

Matthew Forbes, Vicky Gilchrist,
Natalie Malin, Kurtis Hughes -
Alliway Promotions

Shaliza Halani, Maddy Hughes,
Michela Vignola - Project
Merchandise

Adam Mills, TC Branding Group
Carrie Stokes, Bio Laboratories
Ronnie Tavares, Listawood
Jonathan Woodcock, WCM+A

CPM

Marc Barbery, Cara Williams -
Fluid Branding

Benjamin Hillary,
Direct Textiles & Bags

Holly McLoughlin, Impamark



GET FIT FOR TOUGH

The next five years are going to be less benign for businesses. It's time to focus on financial sustainability says **Peter Hill** of Mark Holt & Co



There is no doubt that there is a trend towards 'sustainability' for businesses across many industries. But it is important to understand what we mean when we use that term.

The most obvious interpretation is to aim for your business to have a 'net neutral' impact on the planet through carbon neutral products and processes, recyclable materials, and so on. This may also capture aspects such as so-called 'fast fashion', avoiding products with short lives so that whatever the impact, it is spread over a longer useful life. The shift from technology and white goods that are scrapped when they break, to ones which are designed to be easily repairable.

As accountants, that sort of stuff is not really what we do. However, there will be a time when we are required to report in the accounts of all businesses on their 'impact' or sustainability credentials. Others in the BPMA have the expertise on these issues, so we will leave that content to them.

Let's just consider for a moment 'financial sustainability'.

Every business will see money in from sales and money out from purchases and overheads. What's left might be subject to tax, and the withdrawal of income by owners. Like any other processes, the objective is to cut waste and inefficiency. To require less borrowed cash to run the business.

This splits into two aspects:

1. Increasing incomes and reducing costs, i.e. making more money.
2. Controlling the amount of cash tied up in the business in debtors, stock or other assets.

The object of the exercise is to make any business as self-sufficient as possible and less reliant on outside money with all the risks and costs that that entails.

Many businesses have become used to a low interest rate regime, with easy and fast access to debt. A side effect of low-cost debt is that the drive for high profits and strong cash reserves became less important, because there would always be a quick fix if needed. Businesses would drop prices, shop around less, and spend more than needed, because they had confidence they could borrow to fix any glitches that cropped up. In short, many just got a little lazy in the financial drive of the business. That doesn't mean they were profitable,

they just didn't work as hard to manage profits and cash as they could have.

Moving forward we have already seen interest rate increases, supply chain problems and now rapid inflation and soaring energy costs. For any business to be sustainable in the current economy, there will need to be a greater focus on the bottom line and on building cash reserves to ride out any rough patches. While all banks have plenty of money to lend right now, they will inevitably get more cautious about who they lend it to.

So what should you do?

MAXIMISE PROFITABILITY.

This starts with selling in the right way, to the right customers, and most importantly, at the right price. Previous BPMA articles have covered the importance of price and the fallacy of dropping prices to grow sales, or indeed winning sales from the wrong customers. In an inflationary market selling skills become much more important, and negotiating prices, payment terms and working with the right quality customers become critical issues.

Making sure all costs are controlled is also important. Many make the mistake of searching for the cheapest service or product when the objective should always be value for money. A balance of quality, price and service. What's the point in buying cheap products if they always break, or in paying rock bottom for services if people don't turn up on time and do what they say?

However, the clear objective is to understand the current financial performance of the business and look for all the places that profit leaks out. It is always amazing to us how relatively small changes in prices, costs of sales and overheads, can have the impact of doubling or trebling bottom line profits.

In our experience, this process requires a deliberate 'project' approach. Get the date, involve the right team, do the thinking and agree the actions. Set deadlines and responsibilities to implement changes. Just saying "Let's be tougher on prices and costs" won't make any real difference.

MANAGE MONEY BETTER

The 10 years or so pre-Covid have been a steady and relatively easy economy. Most customers paid, so debt collection

became quite passive. Money was easy to borrow, so few bothered with a cash flow forecast because the bank (or someone else) would cover a short-term glitch or a bigger than expected tax bill for example.

As we enter a more volatile economy, not everyone will pay on time, or at all. You should ensure you have robust credit control procedures (don't even sell to dodgy customers) and better debt collection processes (chase fast and chase hard).

Always borrow appropriately. Many got into the habit of saying, "we have spare cash so don't buy that machine on finance". But once cash is locked up in the asset it may be hard to get back if needed. As a broad rule of thumb:

- Buildings on 15-25 year mortgages.
- Plant, equipment and machinery on 5-15 year terms depending on the life of the asset.
- IT stuff, 3-5 year funding.

Over the next five or more years, cash in your account will be more valuable than saving a few quid on interest costs.

Let's also tackle an issue we see across many clients. For most businesses, times were quite good pre-Covid. In fact, many have made more money during Covid than they did before. High profits and a (comparatively) low tax regime have meant that many business owners were able to extract more cash over that period.

Many bought bigger houses, nicer cars, grander holidays, and got used to an expensive lifestyle they didn't really need. Ok if the money there - it's the client's choice to spend now or save for the future. However, what we have seen in previous recessions, is that many 'high spenders' resist any reduction in their lifestyle when profits and incomes drop. The switch from enough money to enjoy this 'extravagant' lifestyle and have a little left over, to spending more than you make and running up credit cards, loans and overdrafts, is a very fine line. Try ringing the bank from your luxury holiday in Dubai to ask them to cover a shortfall in paying wages at the end of the month. Maybe in the past, but not in the future.

Part of this adjustment is going to be

TIMES

tax driven. Corporation tax rates increase from 19% to 25% in March 2023 (for profits over £250k). NIC rates are increasing, tax allowances are frozen (an effective tax increase in real terms). So even if profits remain the same, what is leftover will reduce at the same time that inflation is running a perhaps as high as 10%.


So, if you want your business to be 'sustainable', so it survives the next five (plus) years of turmoil, then drive financial efficiency, control cash ruthlessly, and consider whether you might be better making some personal spending adjustments before they are forced on you.

ON AN UPBEAT NOTE

In easy times, even poor businesses can do OK. They can scratch a living by

being a little bit cheaper than the good businesses in the market. They get in the way of well-run businesses. Customers get lazy, don't shop around to find the best value for money option. When times get tougher, these poor businesses will go and customers will ask more questions around quality and service to decide who they do business with.

What this means is that better businesses often prosper in tough times. If you make your business lean and fit and focus on the right things, you might do even better as your competition struggles.

Peter Hill is director at business consultants Mark Holt and the author of Pricing for Profit 

30th Preseli Anniversary

Connecting Brands With People

Preseli has been a supplier of popular products to the promotional industry since 1992. During 30 years of trading, we have built our reputation on great service and time-proven reliability.

Our business is delivering our customers' promises on every order, from large to small.

We are a subsidiary company of Preseli Merchandising based in Hong Kong. Their team of experienced merchandisers and logistics personnel ensure that our orders are supplied on time and to specification.

We work with our supply chain to adapt to shifting business and consumer requirements. Our capacity in 2022 is more flexible than ever with scalable Far East production supported by an expanding range of UK Stocked and Manufactured products.

We use UPS carbon neutral services for Air Freight and for local deliveries. We offer the option of sea freight to minimise emissions (and save our customers money). We offer sustainable packaging options, are reducing waste across our business and we continue to add eco friendly options to our product range.

Whether your customer is a local community group or business, a start-up or an established blue chip corporation, Preseli is equipped and ready to receive your order and manage it through every process, from conception to final delivery.

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EXHIBITIONS & CONFERENCE

CORPORATE & PROMOTIONS

CHARITIES & EVENTS

EDUCATION

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WORKPLACE

OFFICE



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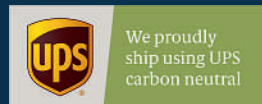
On the web: preseli.biz

By phone: 01352 730 006

By email: sales@preseli.biz

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Order after order, for 30 years, distributors have trusted us with their reputation.



INVEST IN

peace of mind

A phrase you may be familiar with is 'accidents happen'. While this is also true when it comes to cyber security, an accident could be all it takes for your business to suffer at the hands of a cybercriminal.

The Cyber Resilience Centre for the South East receives a weekly round-up of cyber incidents from across the region. These incidents are reported to the police by business owners, with all these incidents causing a level of disruption to the business.

This may be a moderate disruption, or it may have had a huge impact on their service delivery. Many of the incidents that are regularly reported could have been prevented with the implementation of basic cyber security controls. Last year it was reported that 95% of cybersecurity breaches are caused by human error, meaning that unintentional actions or lack of action led to a security breach taking place. With 54% of small business owners not providing regular training on cyber security, this figure of 95% will only increase.

EVERY BUSINESS A TARGET

As a small business owner, you may believe that you have nothing of value to a cybercriminal. Sadly, regardless of the size of your business, you are a source of money, data and are likely to have a reputation all of which are of interest to cybercriminals. The money your business makes could be stolen, your company's data could be revealed to everyone on the internet, and your brand could be damaged or impersonated.

All of these assets can be protected by your employees, who are often the front door or the first line of defence for a small business. Regardless of the type of

business that you run, the responsibility and need for your employees to be trained appropriately in order to protect your business and raise the alarm when something doesn't seem right is key.

Cyber security has three areas: people, processes, and technology.

When looking at people, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) sets clear expectations that staff are to receive induction training prior to accessing data, which must take place within one month of their start date and they must have refresher training at regular intervals. However, most small businesses do not have the ability or the budgets to run regular cyber security training for their teams.

TRAINING

To help bridge the gap of the availability of affordable cyber security training, the police-led Cyber Resilience Centre for the South East can deliver security awareness training. The training is broken down into modules to make it straightforward for all team members to digest, and these modules can be adapted to specifically suit your business.

The content covers security training for you as a person and you as an employee, as our cyber hygiene behaviours can be easily implemented at home and within the workplace environment. The Security Awareness Training that we deliver has been accredited by the Continuing Professional Development

(CPD) Certification Service meaning that your employees and your company will receive a certification which can be added to personal training record and your company's CPD portfolio.

INVEST NOW OR PAY LATER

Training your employees will come at a cost, whether it's a financial or time related, but the cost of a cyber-attack is far higher. In fact, businesses on average are spending at least £8,460 to fix the immediate damage and then spend a further day recovering from a cyber incident.

If you would like to help guard your business from cyber-attacks in the same way you would protect your premises against fire and flood, we offer free membership. This gives you access to regular simple, easy to follow guidance, tools, and resources as well as the opportunity to have a jargon free 1:1 conversation to help you understand your current business cyber related risks.

With your employees being your first and last lines of defence, isn't it worth the investment? Learn more about the security awareness training service offered by The Cyber Resilience Centre for the South East or discover the full range of services at seccr.co.uk/services.

Chris White is a police detective inspector and head of innovation at The Cyber Resilience Centre for the South East 

STICKING WITH *merchandise*

Badger's range of magnets and stickers are a long-running success, and an increasingly sustainable option

Exeter-based Badger Design was started 45 years ago and is now one of the UK's largest magnet manufacturers of printed promotional gifts and products.

As well as a range of standard shapes, it can print magnets of any shape or size and has produced items for many blue-chip companies including Pizza Hut, McDonald's, Innocent Drinks and Warner Brothers.

The company was set up by Don Badger, supplying L plates to Halfords. Don then designed 'knuckle buffers', a novelty item in the Eighties where it looked as if a hand was trapped in the car door.

TAXING TIMES

It was his patented Magnetax that led the company into the promotional market. As the name suggests, the Magnetax magnetically held your tax disc in place on the car windscreen.

Motor magazine said the Magnetax was one of those things you can't believe wasn't invented before. Don's motivation was twofold – he didn't like the look of an ordinary tax disc holder in the windscreen of his new car, and he did not want to waste left over magnetic material from other jobs. He was sustainable before his time.

The demise of the tax disc in 2014 was a big hit to the company as it accounted for 30% of business at the time, however the company has found an array of ways to use magnets, from fridge magnets and bottle openers to picture frames and memo boards.

Badger also offers a vast range of promotional products and gifts such as promotional stickers, Oyster card holders and coasters.

BRITISH MADE

As a member of Briman, the company has found that customers are becoming more responsive to its 'Made in Britain' story, and many companies are now starting to promote it.

The pandemic obviously had an effect,

which sales director Corinna Jones describes as "pros and cons".

"In some ways it has really opened us up to ways of working that wouldn't be considered before. We spent a lot of time updating the website and putting some great images on there. If you have a log in you can get most prices, templates and all of the information that people need, certificates and selling points for the products," she said.

Looking ahead, the company is trying to reduce the amount of products it produces so people know exactly what to come for.

"We are increasing the range of coasters and stickers, whilst keeping magnets as the core of what we do," Jones added.

As with many manufacturers, eco and sustainability are key themes coming from its customers.

"Thankfully eco products and sustainability is becoming more important, what has been lovely to see is people finally starting to buy the sustainable products rather than just offering them as an alternative," Jones said.


The company is always looking for new ways to make our company as eco-friendly as possible. Where possible, the materials for products come from sustainable sources, such as our cork, plywood, slate, glass and ceramics. Even the acrylic used for coasters and magnets is recycled. All paper used is fully FSC certified.

For Badger's range of printed



window, vinyl and paper stickers, it uses non-toxic and non-PVC based materials wherever possible. In 2021, it added biodegradable and recyclable paper stickers to its promotional product list.

All orders are delivered in cardboard boxes that can be readily recycled and sealed with a paper-based tape. Paper-based padding is used instead of plastic bubble wrap to keep items secure.

Badger uses couriers that are committed to reducing their CO₂ emissions and use aero dynamic fuel efficient vehicles. 



ON THE ball

Industry veteran Martin Seymour is retiring from the merchandise industry after more than 40 years this summer.



have known Martin for quite some time; he is an extremely genuine and nice guy. He communicates well and grew a really strong business in its own right before becoming part of the Fluid Family. Many of today's new starters could learn a lot from the way Martin worked and looked after his clients and the way he worked with suppliers."

John Walker, commercial director, Fluid Branding, added: "Martin has been a total pleasure to work with over the last couple of years and I know he will be missed by everyone at Fluid, and I wish he had joined us years ago. However, I fully respect his decision to retire from the industry and he can go and enjoy some well-deserved quality time with his family. Martin will always be part of the Fluid Family and I will make sure he makes an appearance at this year's conference."


A keen amateur footballer until injury forced him to take up the gentler sports of tennis and golf, Martin is a huge Chelsea fan. He met his wife, Leigh, while they were both travelling abroad with Chelsea supporters to watch a game. They were married in Chelsea and held their reception at the club.

He hopes to be seeing more of his team during retirement as well as planning trips to the World Cup and an island-hopping holiday in Greece.

With membership pending at his local



club, Martin is also looking forward to hitting the fairways more regularly.

Martin once applied to Master Chef, and although he didn't get the call, he did meet Gregg Wallace on a river boat cruise, through the wine regions of France. Suffice to say he'll have plenty of time to indulge his love of cooking and work on his signature dishes in the year ahead. 

For the past two years, Martin has been a sales partner at Fluid Branding having run his own company Everything Corporate for many years.

Before entering the world of branded merchandise, he was a junior broker at the London Stock Exchange and had also run a newsagent stand at Esher railway station.

He got his foothold in the industry in the Seventies working for the family business Challenge Trophies, which evolved from specialising in awards to supplying a wider range of promotional items.

His first memory of the value of promotional gifts was when he would see the pens of one of his trophy customer being used by local traders. Martin thought of him as "the pen man" but he also knew the name of his company, and who to call when he needed a caterer for family events.

In the Eighties, Martin seized the opportunity to develop the concept of Challenge Trophies into Everything Corporate. With offices based on the outskirts of London, Martin developed a strong and loyal client base of blue-chip corporate companies, in London and nationwide.

BPMA chair Haydn Willetts wished Martin a well-deserved retirement. "I



CHARGING INTO THE FUTURE

USB 4.0 is coming soon to a desk near you promising even faster charge speeds and data movement, says **Matt Pluckrose**



Technology and hence the flow of new ideas into our industry has been patchy these last few years with Covid affecting worldwide budgets for R&D. This has meant the choice of new items has been somewhat limited, but we are now starting to see some new ideas emerging. During this article we will explore one new area of tech used by us all everyday and how the changes might affect our market over the balance of 2022.

THE SWITCH

The last few years has seen the expansion of understanding by the consumer about why they might switch from standard USB-A ports or plugs (USB 2.0) to the faster and more powerful USB type-C versions (USB 3.0) and it has made quite big news. This has enabled a more standardised connectivity and faster charging for many devices (phones, tablets, laptops, printers,) with one universal port or plug.

MORE CHANGE

Just as we got this fairly clear in our minds and started to buy, promote and adopt new cables and plugs, things of course are about to change again.

There's a new kid on the block as USB 3.2 has moved to USB 4.0 and brought with it some very powerful changes. The new technology/cables look very much like their predecessors – but all is not what it seems as this new technology is a bit like a wolf in sheep's clothing in terms of power and data transfer.

EVEN FASTER TRANSMISSION

USB 4.0 boasts the ability to transmit 4k video with data transfer rates up to 40 Gbps (Gigabytes per second - which is double the previous speed) meaning such devices as gaming consoles, monitors, computers, and TVs will be able to be run quicker via this technology.

It's not all about speed though with power delivery up to 100W this truly is

the future of faster charging/ data movement. It's eight times faster than the original USB 3 technology.

COMPATIBILITY

The good news is the new tech is compatible with older USB ports although will need an adapter to link with the older USB A ports as USB 4.0 is only available via USB-C type cables.

So, for our market look out soon for new sleek cables that are far more powerful than current standard cables. Life is never easy however and of course one challenge as always is whether Apple adopts USB-C for its iPhone range of smart phones – making one port truly universal (USB-C).

However, having already adopted USB-C connectivity and soon with USB 4.0 technology for its Macs and iPad's it surely won't be long until we are all streaming and charging at speeds only dreamt of previously.

This of course then opens up many new promotional product opportunities to integrate this technology into accessories which are designed to carry logos and make the most useful, powerful and desirable promotional tech giveaways the market has seen for quite some years.

Watch this space and as always don't let yourself get behind the



curve as they say on promotional technology – speak to the experts!

Matt Pluckrose is managing director of Desktop Ideas



Membership MATTERS

BPMA welcomes new members and launches referral scheme

Being part of the industry trade body can mean different things to different companies; an accreditation, representation of standards achieved and maintained, proud flag to the industry they have passed the rigour of membership application. As life has changed immeasurably for so many companies and the BPMA alike, membership of the leading industry body has never been more meaningful.

"We're seeing businesses come back to us after many years away," says Tom Robey who heads up membership for the BPMA. "After I joined the Association late in 2019 and just before the pandemic hit, we saw numbers fall in 2020 as expected and then rise over the last 18 months. With retention of members here at an all-time high, we believe we're now well placed to support those in promotional merchandise during this next phase of recovery. We have improved member services immeasurably giving all our members a wealth of information,

resources, and advice."

NEW MEMBERS JOIN THE BPMA IN 2022

Since the start of 2022, the BPMA has already welcomed Coast Promotions, RD & M Gregg, Big Bear Promo, Regal Toys, Apple Print, Mr Bamboo Cup, PMG and Aztec Group (see p41). With many more suppliers and distributors applying to the BPMA as trading conditions up the call for accredited businesses, it's busy at the BPMA office.

CEO Carey Trevill notes: "The trend we see now in membership reflects the end user drive for greater accountability and transparency coupled with less experience in buying. We all look for those reassuring signs of membership logos and the pre-vetted status this comes with when dealing with businesses. With the stakes higher than ever, the BPMA crown is the sign to show you've got the right creds and turns your decision maker into a buyer faster."

REFER AND EARN

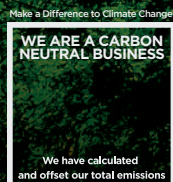
The BPMA has developed a new referral scheme for members to refer businesses to the Association. An important part of the membership application process is the peer-to-peer recommendation so it's a perfect way to start. The BPMA is rewarding member referrals which are accepted into membership with £150 in vouchers to reward the recommendation. Currently working on several referred applications for membership, the BPMA has been delighted with the response so far.

Do you know a company that would benefit from BPMA membership?

Get in touch with Tom Robey at the Association to find out what's involved with referrals by calling 01372 317183 or emailing Tom at tom@bpma.co.uk. Terms and conditions apply.

If you'd like to find out more about joining the BPMA, please contact Tom Robey on 01372 371183 or email membership@bpma.co.uk

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Export Month: bringing the information to the industry

During March this year, the BPMA executed a series of sessions aimed at helping members still facing challenges with customs and freight. With freight and carrier costs settling at an all-time high, the BPMA has been challenging Government to address the profits not being passed back to an industry that has seen all costs rise exponentially in the last few months.

Suppliers have reported the need to review costs in days and weeks rather than a few times a year and at least 31% of suppliers surveyed said they had to pass on costs straightaway. Conversely distributors are finding a more sympathetic ear with their customers as the general rise of costs is now broadly known as opposed to how it was 12 months ago. However, it can restrict their ability to do business in the EU with

long-standing customers.

Hosting sessions with Government team Business Energy and Industrial Strategy Department and customs experts, clearBorder, it's clear there is still a lot of friction and confusion over customs when it comes to exporting and importing, and at customs border control too.

Reminding members of resources available on everything from tariffs to the plastic packaging tax, the Association used Export Month to promote its participation with UKAEG; a Government backed programme promoting creative industries, helping put promotional merchandise on to the centre stage.

Meanwhile, BPMA members have recently been invited to take part in a deep dive economic study into the impact of Brexit with Exeter University, and *PM* will be reporting findings in the next issue.

Measuring the impact and providing expertise where it counts

Post-pandemic the race to be more sustainable or reach net zero is a pressure most large end users are facing. The knee jerk reaction is sadly to pull up the draw bridge when it comes to seemingly non-planet friendly areas such as merchandise however this is where the promotional merchandise professional comes in with expert advice and guidance.

As a great example, Cannes Lions which is advertising's version of the Oscars takes place this June in the beautiful surroundings of Cannes in the south of France. Hearing the organisers had decided to restrict merchandise from the event, the BPMA quickly stepped in to offer sustainable and circular loop merchandise to the UKAEG group attending the event.

As part of this group, the BPMA pushed the agenda to ensure the effective and important role of merchandise at such a high-profile event was not missed. Bringing together the best of British business, an array of fantastic products are winging their way to the festival to represent BPMA members in the most impactful way. *PM* will share pictures of UK merch gracing the Cannes Lions Google beach and grabbing the spotlight on the Instagram stage.

Local Support Contact Details

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

London and South

David Barker
dbarker@directroute.co.uk
07766 545871

Midlands and East Anglia

Ken Brown
kbrown@directroute.co.uk
07795 214426

Wales and North West

Ian Jenkinson
ijenkinson@directroute.co.uk
07860 197476

North East, Scotland and Northern Ireland

Mike Collins
mike@accountassyst.com
07866 427363



Trackable sustainability from Jutebag

Bag specialist Jutebag has a sustainability story it can prove from start to finish due to a partnership with Cyclo and Aware technologies.

With Cyclo recycled fibres, textile waste from garment manufacturers in Bangladesh is procured and undergoes a mechanical recycling process without the use of water, dyes or chemicals. It is then blended with recycled polyester to create a brand new, coloured yarn.

This results in a highly environmentally friendly textile alternative that is part of a closed-loop production system which upcycles pre-consumer textile waste such as cutting scraps.

It also embeds tracers into

its fibres to grant consumers the ability to track the entire journey of the product with Aware tracer technology.

This technology enables consumers to verify all sustainability claims which improves trust between consumers and businesses and eradicates greenwashing. Simply scan the QR code on the label of bags to gain full insight into where the material came from.

The new collection from Jutebag is made from 70% recycled cotton and 30% recycled polyester (rPET).

Cyclo is a member of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC) and its process produces 96.3% less CO₂ than virgin fibres.

REACT, ADAPT AND IMPROVE

Marketing in a dynamic world needs to be alert to the everchanging consumer and their environment says **Melissa Chevin**



In the world of marketing, one thing can be guaranteed – things never stand still. The goalposts are constantly shifting, bringing both new opportunities and challenges. In this article, we'll look at some of the key points you should be considering for your marketing strategies in 2022 and beyond.

First of all, it's important to acknowledge that content marketing is never a 'one and done' solution – it's an ever-evolving space, and sharing content consumers find valuable in order to ultimately generate sales is definitely a case of 'the long game'.

TEST YOUR CONTENT

Many marketers may conduct 'A-B' testing of advertising landing pages – but don't neglect to do the same for organic search traffic on high-value SEO pages, such as pillar content and blogs. Why not try running an A-B test on your website's most popular blog post and see if it helps increase your conversion rate?

A WHOLE NEW WORLD

Did you know that as of last year, an estimated 85 million people were using virtual or augmented reality applications? That figure was more than double the previous year, as advances in technology have made VR and AR ever more attractive. If 'marketing in the metaverse' isn't already part of your content strategy, you need to act now.

While you're at it, don't neglect

the part AR and 3D imaging has to play in e-commerce. These technologies allow potential customers to visualise products in their own spaces, and are now really coming into their own.

GET THE PICTURE

Video has been hot for a while, but it's still a key component of a company's marketing spread. It's a great medium to showcase company culture and the in-depth benefits of the services you provide. Don't forget video's potential in straightforward advertising, either – moving images can make far more impact in social media marketing than stills.

WHO'S YOUR AMBASSADOR?

One of the strongest marketing trends over the last few years has been the rise of the influencer, on social media channels such as YouTube, TikTok and Instagram. This year, we are likely to see yet another spike in individual content creation through the use of vlogs, blogs and podcasts.

Businesses which understand the power of this content – and incorporate it into their marketing strategies – will be leading in 2022, as they identify trends and turn content creators into brand ambassadors.

THE RIGHT VALUES

Value-driven content will become the norm in 2022. Compared to before the pandemic, customers now expect brands to speak

authentically and with empathy. This includes addressing such key touchpoints as sustainability, social responsibility, inclusivity and diversity.

Don't forget to apply the same values in the more mundane but crucial communications – for example, addressing shipping times and product shortages. Finally, remember that

corporate commitment to these values has to be more than skin-deep. Today's savvy customer can spot virtue signalling a mile off, so you need to walk the talk as well as talk the talk.

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

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We are actively recruiting and seeking those members who are already eligible to apply for the Charter standard. To find out more about how you can be part of this additional mark of quality and assurance, please contact us today. Call **01372 371184** or contact **membership@bpma.co.uk**

BPMA Charter: the ultimate in industry standards.

[Bpma.co.uk/charter-status](https://bpma.co.uk/charter-status)

BPMA Charter is open to all BPMA members. Charter Status awarded subject to application and audit.



BPMA new members

Over the last few months the BPMA has welcomed a number of exciting new businesses to the benefits of membership and our network.

ANC Manufacturing BPMA Trade Exclusive Supplier

ANC Manufacturing is the manufacturing arm of Ancestors Group Ltd, formed in 1992, dedicated to UK manufacturing from its site in Folkestone, Kent. The company has a fully trained design team to create or amend new and existing products or ideas. It has more than 20 different manufacturing processes which can individually be split into their own small specialist factories all under one roof. ANC has been servicing the promotional industry for more than 20 years, but has also been the best kept secret manufacturer, it claims. ancmanufacturing.co.uk

Scribes Digital Print BPMA Distributor

Scribes is a family run company with more than 30 years' experience in commercial printing and associated trades. It is based in Hull which is in the East Riding of Yorkshire and employs a team of dedicated industry experts to help with your requirements. thepromoshop.co.uk

Printed Paper Bags BPMA Multi-Channel Supplier

The London based print and packaging company's mission statement is buy direct from the manufacturer. It is proud to call itself the United Kingdom's leading retailer of luxury printed paper carrier bags, acid free printed tissue paper. printedpaperbagsdirect.co.uk

1 World Print BPMA Distributor

The business offers a wide range of personalised garments and merchandising and prides itself on being an expert in printed promotional merchandising. 1worldprint.co.uk

Rosslyn Marketing Services BPMA Distributor

Established in 1995, Rosslyn has

many years of experience of supplying promotional merchandise, print and displays. It also offers a series of associated services such as international fulfilment and programme management. rosslyn.co.uk

Mr Bamboo Cup BPMA Distributor

Claiming to supply the UK's number 1 branded water bottles with eco-friendly credentials, the company's mission is to provide beautiful, highest-quality, positive impact items that customers are proud to own and carry daily for 5-10 years. mrbamboocup.com

Aztec Group BPMA Distributor

Aztec Group can keep your brand fresh in everyone's mind by upgrading your range with a tailored package suited to your business, bringing your business to life with branded merchandise. aztecgroupprint.net

Big Bear Promo BPMA Distributor

Welcome to Big Bear Promo with 20 years' experience between the two directors. It is an exciting new company in the market that aims to make the client's journey a smooth as possible. For friendly and helpful advice for any of promotional needs please feel free to contact them. bigbearpromo.co.uk

Monarch Print BPMA Multi-Channel Supplier

Regal Toys, one of the leading soft toy suppliers in the UK, can print almost anything on to promotional products, including printed soft toys and teddy bears.

Apple Print BPMA Distributor

AP&C can print everything - cake, coats and even cameras, as well as a range of things not beginning with 'C' like dice, donuts and so on. Name the item and they can put your logo on it to promote your business. appleprint.co.uk

Member referral scheme

A very warm welcome to all and we invite all members and PM readers to find out more about our latest members.

Don't forget the BPMA Referral Scheme: do you know a business who could benefit from being part of the BPMA?

When you refer a business who is eligible for BPMA membership, you could earn yourself £150 in high street vouchers.

To find out more, contact Tom Robey on tom@bpma.co.uk. Terms apply.

BPMA CALENDAR

4 May

BPMA Education Day North, Manchester

17 May

BPMA Education Day South, Milton Keynes

15 June

BPMA Golf Day: The Nottinghamshire

14 September

Merchandise World Peak Season Event, Milton Keynes

10-12 January 2023

PSI Dusseldorf

January 2023

Merchandise World New Year Event, Coventry





PUTTING THE **B** INTO BUSINESS

BPMA membership manager Tom Robey visited Fluid Branding to hear about its social and environmental approach

To chase the good weather in March, the association was invited to visit the Fluid Branding offices in Cornwall. A fair drive but once arrived at the impressive ESAM building at Carludden Technology Park, I could make out the sea from the car park. Not something I can say for our offices, closer to London.

There was a warm welcome from Gemma Richards, Fluid Branding's marketing manager and the team, with a quick tour of the building. The energy efficient build is shared with a number of local companies as part of a multi-million pound regeneration project. The building very much fits into the Fluid Branding ethos.

We wanted to delve into the Fluid Futures, Friends and Family pillars and the company's B-Corp status.

FUTURES

The Fluid Futures group, which Gemma also chairs, supports meaningful contribution to the companies' wider communities. The team is encouraged to get involved in various charitable works to highlight issues

and help where they can.

A recent example is the setting up of a Charity & Community Project Match Funding scheme. The Futures group match funds the team's charity initiatives. At the time of the visit, Fluid was nine days away from closing a Ukraine fundraiser, which included match funding. At nearly £500 at the time, the team managed to raise a total of £1,440 in just 14 days with Fluid matching this total.

FAMILY

The Fluid Family group focuses on growing internal teams to be exceptional and delivering outstanding results for customers, the community, and themselves. B-Corp certified and taking total accountability to really look after staff health, happiness and futures, Fluid works as a close-knit team. If the company and teams are exceptional, so too are products and services sold.

FRIENDS

The third pillar, Fluid Friends, looks at

customer and supplier relationships. Developing valuable relationships and creating success leads to positive industry change. As the website states and as many suppliers Fluid works with can attest, valued partnerships over transactional relationships and being successful together, rather than simply making a profit does make a difference to all involved.

Each of the three pillars meet monthly to review agendas so the pillars are very much a way the teams are constantly in communication and consider forthcoming actions.

Having previously worked for a B-Corp company outside the sector, practising Business as a Force for Good, many of the values I know from experience improve not only relationships internally and externally but also give back to the local community and further. B-Corp is certainly a movement I know is becoming stronger and stronger in the UK.

With BPMA Education Days in Manchester and Milton Keynes in May and with the BPMA Golf Day in June, I'm sure we'll be visiting more BPMA members across the map in the summer months.

If you'd like to speak to us in person about your membership and to book in an association visit to your offices, don't hesitate to let us know on membership@bpma.co.uk. ²²⁶



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