



PRODUCTMEDIA

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE PROMOTIONAL INDUSTRY

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2019

... and the winners are...



Find out who won the Merchandise World Promotional Products Awards p22



FUTURE FOCUS

THE BPMMA'S NEW CHAIR ON THE ROAD AHEAD **P13 >**



A GIFT FOR GIVING
INDIA'S BOOMING CORPORATE GIFT MARKET **P11**

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WELCOME



It gives me great pleasure to introduce this issue of *Product Media Magazine*, my first since joining the BPMA, and what an exciting time of year it is too.

As usual, January is a very busy month with the annual international shows such as PSI and PPAI Expo, culminating in our own Merchandise World show at the end of the month at NAEC Stoneleigh on 30-31 January. Come and see the latest product launches, hot ideas and trends from the UK's leading suppliers.

Our Education Day this year will be the day before the show on 29 January at

Chesford Grange. Whether you're in sales, marketing or a business owner, this is an event not to be missed. You will need to book so if you haven't already please look at the BPMA website for more details.

With the first day of the show complete, everyone will be getting dressed up to attend the social event of the year - the BPMA Awards Dinner. It's sold out yet again, and we're all looking forward to a great gathering, celebrating with the winners of these prestigious awards.

There is no doubt that our industry will be affected in 2019 by political and global influences, such as Brexit and the fight against single use plastics. Both of these examples, however, present opportunities and as an industry we will adapt. In

overseeing the Merchandise World Product of the Year Awards process, I was pleased to see that the Eco Product of the Year Award featured by far the highest number of entries - 21 products from 20 suppliers. This clearly shows that our suppliers are already following the trend, giving distributors the products that they need to sell to an engaged audience.

You can see who won the Merchandise World Product of the Year Awards on page 22 of *Product Media* and you can also see the products on the BPMA stand at Merchandise World.

I look forward to seeing you all there!

Jon Birrell
BPMA CEO

Product Media Magazine is available to the whole promotional merchandise industry. It is the official magazine of the British Promotional Merchandise Association (BPMA).



British Promotional Merchandise Association

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PF Concept and SPS EU unite for growth with investment plan

European promotional supplier PF Concept and Blackpool manufacturer SPS EU have become one operation under the name of PF Concept UK Ltd. The move follows the acquisition of SPS EU by PF Concept in December 2017.

As part of the transition, PF Concept is investing in the UK business to increase capacity, make it easier for customers to place orders, and deliver good customer service.

PF Concept and SPS will combine their product portfolios into one collection, offering PF Concept products alongside The British Collection. In preparation for this, PF Concept has relocated its UK sales team and customer service functions to the SPS



Phil Morgan

manufacturing site in Blackpool.

SPS has plans to expand its operations to take on an additional 30,000ft² next to the current manufacturing facility. This area will become a dedicated print unit, supporting the team in delivering extra printing capabilities and helping to reduce current lead times.

The combined PF Concept UK team will be led by Phil Morgan, with Tracey Bowen leading the sales and marketing functions. Bowen said 2019 would be a big year for PF Concept. "With a unified team, new products, a new facility and new equipment,



Tracey Bowen

we believe we will take big strides forward as a business, all of which will be hugely beneficial to our customers."

Phil Morgan, director and CEO at SPS said: "Just as PF Concept is renowned for a fantastic product range and short lead times, SPS has a great reputation for UK manufacturing.

With such a strong focus on the need for re-usable drinkware, our growth has been significant, and this additional investment will be critical to us meeting demand in the UK and across Europe."

PF Concept has also acquired the assets of Paper Innovation, a specialist in sticky-note products. Quarter one of 2019 will see the launch of a wide range of sticky-note products, all manufactured in Blackpool.

Willsmer Wagg looks to the future with 20th anniversary

Willsmer Wagg kicked off 12 months of celebrations as it enters its 20th year in business by inviting some of its long-standing suppliers to celebrate at an afternoon tea presentation and gala dinner.

Key partners joined the distributor at its head office in Worthing for the event. After the tea, Lawrence Angelow of the Advantage Group gave a speech on the history of the company and managing director Debbie Willsmer's hard work, highlighting the strength of the company, its awards, and its reputation within the industry.

Debbie Willsmer said it was important to invite key partners to celebrate, in order to thank them for their support. "They share our vision and commitment to excellence, and we know we couldn't have done it without them."

Partners were represented from a range of organisations, including Senator, PF Concept, The Sweet People, Listawood, Desktop Ideas, and the BPMA among others.

Willsmer Wagg account directors Lesley Levi and Becky Gregory gave a presentation highlighting how supplier partners had worked with the company to help win major new business and contracts, showing the value of their hard work and support. The presentation



Daniela Arena receives an award on behalf of the BPMA from Debbie Willsmer

detailed how Willsmer Wagg differentiates itself from other distributors and provided pointers on how suppliers could continue to work with it.

The afternoon was followed by an evening gala dinner at a local restaurant. Key partners were recognised with a personalised award certificate featuring Worthing Pier by a local artist.

Looking to the future Willsmer Wagg is committed to sustained growth and securing additional blue-chip clients. It has recently launched a B2B division, Wow Hampers and is launching into 2019 with a new sales plan.

Congratulations Willsmer Wagg

"Great to see the team and learn more about how you differentiate what you do. The obvious enthusiasm and professionalism came across in waves."

Sim Shalom, Listawood

"A massive thank you to the team for a great presentation and evening. Congratulations on achieving 20 years."

Jason Grenham, Sourcing City

"A fantastic day and evening. So lovely to see you reward, recognise and appreciate our suppliers."

Daniela Arena, BPMA

"We are so proud to have been a part of what you have achieved over 20 years. It is a privilege and a pleasure to work with the team."

Phil Roberts and Simone Veasy, Fanela

"Dealing with Willsmer Wagg is not like any standard client relationship. It is more like working with friends."

Matt Pluckrose, Desktop Ideas



If you have any stories for **Product Media Magazine**, send by email to: editor@productmediamagazine.co.uk



Hay Hampers lauded as a top small business

Hay Hampers joined the UK's top small businesses as it was recognised as one of this year's Small Biz 100 at an exclusive House of Lords reception.

The Bourne luxury food and wine gift company received plaudits for its contribution to the UK economy and its local community ahead of the recent Small Business Saturday. The House of Lords reception echoed the support for the event seen across Government, since the campaign came to the UK in 2013. Last year, the Prime Minister and the Mayor of London came out in support of the day, along with the majority of local councils.

Elisabeth Och, marketing director, Hay Hampers, said: "We are thrilled to have

the honour of taking part in this special celebration at The House of Lords and being chosen as one of the top 100 small businesses in this country."

Lord Young of Graffham, former Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and Government Adviser on enterprise and small business, hosted the event. He said that small businesses played a critical role in fuelling the British economy.

"They are the true backbone of our economy, helping to drive growth across all areas of the country. Hosting the impressive businesses in this year's Small Biz 100 was a huge pleasure, and it is only a small part of the recognition they deserve for their entrepreneurial spirit shown day in, day out."

SMALL BUSINESS, BIG NUMBERS

99.3% - the percentage of private sector businesses that are small businesses (2018)

16.3 million - total employment by SMEs

60% - of all private sector employment in the UK

£2.0 trillion - combined annual turnover of SMEs

52% - of all private sector turnover

Hayley's brand expertise strengthens team

Branded bag specialist Bagco has added a new account manager. Hayley Clark has previously worked with a portfolio of leading names such as Disney, Cath Kidston, Paperchase and FitFlop in retail head office roles.

Bagco owner Nigel Pearce said that Clark's role was a key customer-facing one. "She brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience. We have some exciting new products in the pipeline, as well as extensions to existing ranges, with new colours and finishes. Bagco continues to innovate in terms of

both product and service levels – and I'm confident Hayley will help us spread that message among the trade."

Clark added: "I wanted to work for Bagco because the company stood out to me as an innovative business with a great heritage, a strong stance on compliance and an extensive and exciting product range. It's a close-knit team with a wide range of industry knowledge and a huge passion for supporting clients with creative solutions, so I'm really excited to be given the opportunity to join them. I have a passion for products and building strong customer relationships."



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DID YOU KNOW?

Our bio ranges are made from sugar cane which can produce up to double the amount of raw material and uses much less water than the more commonly used maize. All of our pens contain genuinely part recycled material. Our Super Hit Recycled pen contains 95%.

BIO MATERIAL

CERTIFIED SAFE

SMETA®

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CONTINUITY

Because we are a manufacturer, not a generalist, repeat orders with the same **high-quality results can be continuously achieved** by using high-quality materials and exacting standards.

COMMUNITY

senator® has been a long standing advocate of improved learning for people of all ages and abilities through its global partnership programmes. senator® and its employees actively work with local charities to give back to their communities in order to make a positive difference.

BEST IN CLASS PRINT

senator® is the only promo pen company with a purpose built printing facility. **Our high class branding ensures quality durable advertising, guaranteed to last the lifetime of the pen.**

CARBON FOOTPRINT

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REACH

senator® have been manufacturing pens at our technology plant in Groß-Bieberau for almost **100** years.

MADE IN GERMANY

senator®
Extraordinary Since 1920.



Every working day over one million pens across 42 fully-automated injection moulding machines are expertly produced.

RE-USE & RECYCLE

100% of our production waste is either reused or recycled.

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ECO



100% GREEN ELECTRICITY

is used at our manufacturing plant which is powered using hydro-electric power generated by the local River Main.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Year-on-year pens top the list of promo items.

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USB2U raises funds and awareness with Movember

Members of USB2U's trade sales team took part in Movember to raise money to fund research into some of the biggest health issues faced by men.

Five of the team took part in the campaign, raising £330. Funds raised help finance research into prostate cancer, testicular cancer, and mental health and suicide prevention.

Liam Smith, USB2U's Movember Team captain, said: "We have spoken before about raising money for this cause, but we have never all participated together as a team. We didn't expect to raise over £300 and we are proud of how our colleagues, friends and family have



supported our new temporary facial hair (and such a great charity) with their donations."

As well as raising money, the event also got the conversation about men's health going in the USB2U office. Talking about these kinds of things is all part of the Movember message to encourage men to open up and get checked out if they have any worries. Movember aims to reduce the number of men dying prematurely by 25% by 2030.

Andy, Liam, Rich, Sam and Darren started the month clean shaven, and documented their growth with a time lapse video which was made available on USB2U's social media channels.



Linda Graham



Claire Appleton



Gary Bucci

Three new associates join Galpeg

The Galpeg Associate Programme continues to go from strength to strength, with the addition of three new promotional product distributors.

LKG Merchandise, Insignia Promotions and GB Merchandise, have all recently signed up to the programme, which provides time-saving outsourcing tools and resources for independent distributors, allowing them to concentrate on growing their businesses.

Linda Graham, owner of LKG Merchandise, said: "The desire to run my business my way was a big impetus to teaming up with Galpeg. Doing so has freed me of the routine tasks and I can focus my time more effectively on seeking out new business opportunities."

Claire Appleton, MD of Insignia Promotions, said: "I have been running my own business for many years and saw this as a great way

forward. I wanted to take my business to the next level with the back office support and financial backing provided by Galpeg."

GB Merchandise has been trading for little under a year. Gary Bucci of the company said that GB Merchandise had experienced steep growth soon after joining the programme. "I'm now able to focus my time purely on account development opportunities. We also secured big orders with Galpeg's financial backing, as initially I didn't have the money to finance these myself. There are ambitious plans in place for GB Merchandise, and we are already seeing some of them come to fruition."

Galpeg MD Paul Green welcomed the new distributors and said: "The freedom and success our existing associates continue to enjoy remains the best advertisement for attracting new associates."

Goldstar appointments continue investment in growth plans

Goldstar has added two promotional industry veterans to newly created positions as it invests in growing its business.

Diane Anderton has joined the pens specialist to support new product development and marketing, while Annouchka Birch has taken up the new position of field sales manager UK.

Anderton brings 24 years' industry experience including 14 years on the distributor side and the last ten years in the trade as sales and marketing director with SPS.

Colin Loughran, general manager, Goldstar said Anderton would be a great asset to the business. "Her confidence to push boundaries and industry thinking is perfectly aligned with the Goldstar philosophy. Her vast knowledge of the trade-supplier industry will be put to great use in her new product development and marketing role."

Birch spent the past two years as corporate sales director at T-Print. She has held senior sales roles in the promotional merchandising and clothing sectors for more than eleven years, including seven years with PF Concept UK.

Loughran said the appointments were the first of several extra positions Goldstar was creating to increase its staff to 40. "We are committed to making the most of the unfulfilled potential we see for our products in the UK. Our 10 year growth plan is ambitious and we are determined to maintain our reputation for first class customer service as we grow," he added.



ASK CLIVE

Double bagging doesn't just happen in the supermarket. **Clive Allcott** says the clothing industry needs to wean itself off overpackaging



With single use plastic concerns across the promotional industry, how can garment decorators, clothing suppliers and distributors help in this global issue? Overpackaging is a great concern not only in textiles but across all trading platforms.

As garment decorators we are often facing the issue of double or overpackaging. The supplied garments are delivered in individual polythene bags which are removed to apply the agreed branding method, the completed garment is then re-bagged and boxed ready for the delivery.

With growing awareness of environmental issues, we need to change this and clothing suppliers and wholesalers are looking to deliver as a bulk packaged product (placed in one bag for protection instead of individual bagging).

This may be a small step but it will be the first of many.

Decorators are also looking to replace the standard plastic bag with alternatives such as bio degradable/ compostable packaging, however research is still not conclusive on this as a solution.

Biodegradable plastics take three to six months to decompose fully which is much quicker than synthetic counterparts that can take several hundred years. Ideal. Or is it? The concern is in exactly how long a biodegradable bag takes to break down as it is dependent on factors such as temperature and the amount of moisture present. Many biodegradable or compostable plastics have to be separated from the rest of the plastic waste and sent to

a purpose-designed industrial composting facility. These facilities exist for food waste, but ensuring compostable packaging reaches them can be challenging. It is another step in the right direction but not the full solution.

There are other ways to present and package the garment such as recycled paper, pillow packs even potato sacks however they

mean additional costs. As suppliers we are continuously looking to find solutions but distributors need to drive these ideas into the marketplace.

It's in your hands to make a difference. Ask your decorator what options they have for packaging garments. It might be just what your client is looking for.

Clive, The Branded Clothing Guru



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A GIFT FOR GIVING

The corporate gift market in India is showing huge annual growth, reports its trade association the CGAI

India is one of the most hospitable countries in the world, and gifting is part of its culture, heritage and social customs. Be it business or personal occasions, India and Indians are amongst the most passionate people about giving and receiving gifts.

The gifting industry in India has predominantly been an unorganised sector with no recognition or representation domestically or internationally. Therefore, the market size is not accurately available, but according to industry sources, the total size of Indian corporate and personal gifting market put together is about INR 150,000 crore (€17 billion). The corporate gifting segment in India is estimated to be INR 20,000 crore (€2.2bn) and is growing at more than 150% per annum.

Like everything else, the gifting market is changing in India. Personal gifting is on the rise, with the number of gifting occasions increasing, such as anniversaries, weddings, birthdays, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, and specific Indian festivals.

Corporate gifting has its own challenges and issues unique to the industry, with corporate clients being more demanding than ever before, helping to drive unique branding and customisation innovations.

The growth of corporate gifting led to the formation of the Corporate Gifts Association of India (CGAI) in 2013. Like the sector, it has grown rapidly and is

now a member organised association of more than 400. It is the only active association in India with members and trade affiliations, and recognition with domestic and internationally relevant trade partners and associations.

Vision

The CGAI endeavours to be one of the most respected and reputable associations in India by enhancing innovation and creativity among its members. The Association aims to lead and provide exemplary services to its members to achieve business excellence and continual growth.

Purpose and benefits

Members of the CGAI are able to access a number of benefits. The CGAI creates a platform for better unity among its members and builds collective bargaining strength. Members are updated on industry issues via seminars, conferences, newsletters, and so on. It also assists in providing legal representation for the industry and helps protect its members' business interests. It has created a platform to redress trade and legal matters.

Furthermore, the CGAI has developed strong recognition locally and internationally through affiliations with



info@cgai.in www.cgai.in

various global trade channels providing better opportunities for members.

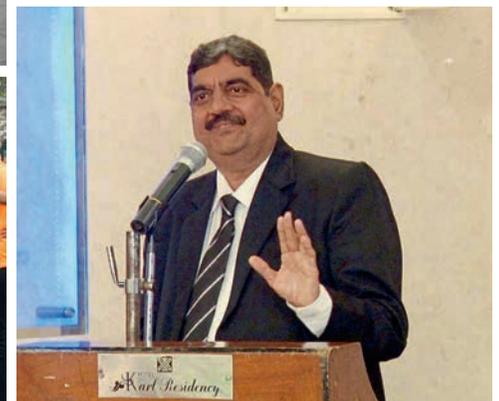
Events strategy

To help build the sector in India, the CGAI has developed its affiliation with industry-leading exhibition partners such as Messe Frankfurt, HKTDC, Gifts & Accessories, Netlink Solutions, inFairs, and Winmark, to name a few. It also organises an intra-member annual trade exhibition that sees huge trade between its members.

CGAI conducts seven seminars annually on various topics with renowned speakers ranging from motivation, technology and management style changes.

On the social side, the much awaited CGAI Cricket League is organised annually as a team-building exercise among its members from different companies who otherwise are competitors in the business world.

www.cgai.in



The BPMA Annual Awards Dinner

The Party starts at 7.15pm on Wednesday
30th January 2019

Tickets for the industry event of the year were snapped up in record time.

The evening at Chesford Grange finishes at 1am, so anyone staying there will have a short walk to their rooms. For those staying further afield we have arranged two buses that will both be leaving at 11pm and 1am sharp, one going to the Warwick/Leamington direction and the other one to Coventry.

We look forward to seeing you there.



➤ Visit bpma.co.uk/events for more information

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THE VISION FOR THE FUTURE

As she takes over as chairman of the BPMA, **Angela Wagstaff** explains what makes her tick and outlines her plans for the Association



Allwag Promotions was named Page Partnership Distributor of the Year in 2016

"Education is high on the agenda for me. We need a career path with apprenticeships playing a bigger role and that are aligned through the marketing sector to universities. A lot of us fall into this business, but I want it to be a career of choice for those coming through."

A career in merchandise is one rich with variety, she says. There are a lot of areas that people need to understand, from compliance and legal issues to creativity and environmental impacts which is what makes it so exciting and challenging.

Ironically, Angela herself is one of the generation of founders who did 'fall into' the business, and built her way up.

She started the company with her husband initially to provide sports merchandise as Alan was involved with lots of sports clubs. "We thought we'd give it a go and after the

The Allwag years

2018

Angela Wagstaff becomes chairman of the board of the BPMA

2016

BPMA Employer of the Year
Page Partnership - Distributor of the Year, nominated by the industry's suppliers

2014

Quality management standard - ISO 9001 and environmental management standard ISO 14001

Angela Wagstaff became vice chair on the board of the BPMA

2013

Became approved A/B members of Supplier Ethical Data Exchange (Sedex)

2012

Angela Wagstaff joined the board of the BPMA as director of education

The BPMA's new chairman, Angela Wagstaff, has the sort of entrepreneurial spirit that's common in the merchandise industry. The business she helped start with her husband Alan turns 20 years old next year, which is something of a belated victory for the couple.

"Alan had been made redundant three times in the print industry and people were saying there was no future in merchandise," she says. "We thought they were wrong and started the business to prove a point. It was the classic start-up from the back of the garage."

It's the sort of no-nonsense approach that people who know Angela will be familiar with. The Essex business woman describes herself as passionate, committed and prepared to get involved, all characteristics that will stand her in good stead for her new role chairing the BPMA. She took over the position in November from outgoing chairman, and now president, Graeme Smith, having

spent the past two years as vice-chair.

She talks passionately about the challenges ahead for the industry. "There are some things that we can't affect and we just have to get on with, but there are so many other great opportunities where our destiny is more in our own hands."

Education first

Angela rattles off a list of objectives from her to do list as she prepares to hit the ground running. First up is education.



Angela and her husband Alan founded Allwag Promotions almost 20 years ago

Interview

first year we saw there was an appetite," she says.

With a background in recruitment, training, sales and marketing, Angela had been working as a business consultant, so she started to apply some of the skills she had successfully applied to other businesses to Allwag Promotions, working through where they wanted it to go and how to get there.

"We saw offering a personal and trusted service as really important," she says. "We love speaking to and meeting people to find out what marketing problems they are facing to allow us to create solutions, rather than just taking orders. It just continued to grow from there."

Associated benefits

From the start, she saw the importance of trade association membership and Allwag Promotions joined the BPMA as soon as it could. "With my background in business consultancy, I saw the value of being aligned with a trade association and of networking with others in the industry."

She was invited to stand for election to the board about six years ago. "I had 'words' with Gordon and he said that as I had such strong opinions and was willing to offer support, I should join," she laughs.

Change has come about during that time, transforming an organisation she describes as "a lot of men in grey suits and that was considered a bit of a closed shop."

By contrast, today's board is the strongest it has ever been, she says. "We have just appointed three fabulous new directors who have passion, professionalism and enthusiasm. It's great to see so much momentum forming from within the industry."



Angela receives the BPMA award for Distributor of the year from Listawood's Alex Turner

A stronger BPMA

The experience of certain distributors going into administration has also underlined the need for change and has galvanised the industry to get them talking about the issues that are important. It has also got businesses sharing their experiences and talking about the role the BPMA can play and why it is important, she believes. "More members are returning, which is fabulous."

Angela is positive on the appointment of Jon Birrell as the new CEO, having been part of the team that appointed him. "I'm really excited that he's involved. He's very considered and member focussed and it's a really exciting time for the BPMA."

As well as driving home the importance of education, Angela has her focus on several other areas. One of which is how the industry can help clients to deal with branded merchandise that becomes surplus to requirements, such as when a business rebrands. With more companies concerned about sustainability, there is an opportunity to provide

a solution that recycles, or re-uses this merchandise.

The BPMA is working with several charities at the moment to see if there are ways of rebranding by covering up or removing branding. "The BPMA wants a united solution. Trade waste is a challenge but there could be a positive story here as we can not only benefit members but also charities."

The next generation

Another area she sees as important is involving more of the younger staff in the industry. "We're a bit set in our ways and we need to understand from our future leaders, where the industry should be heading," she adds.

"Buying patterns have changed and the industry can be a bit old fashioned. I listen to my daughters for advice."

Through the Academy, the BPMA wants to develop a mentor scheme to harness young people's enthusiasm enabling them to learn from those who have a wealth of experience. A youth focus group is planned to help the BPMA understand the impact of digital on buying habits, particularly among Millennials.

Allwag itself has a line on mentorship, through involvement with Kids Inspire, a Chelmsford charity that works with disadvantaged youngsters trying to help them get a better start in life. Seven of the Allwag team are training as mentors.

It is an approach which could sum up Angela's new role at the BPMA. "Giving something back is really important and it gives a great sense of satisfaction," she says.

2011

BPMA Charter status recognised

Winner - Sourcing City Distributor of the Year

2010

Winner - BPMA Distributor of the Year

Achieved Investors in People Gold standard

2009

BPMA 10 year accredited, demonstrating the company is financially sound and abides by the BPMA code of conduct ensuring standards are met at the highest level.

Joined Green Achiever scheme, demonstrating commitment to becoming a greener and more environmentally friendly business

2008

ISIS accredited online retailer

Newly launched website awarded the Mid Essex Business Award - e-business category

2007

Investors in People recognition

2006

Won several major tenders, including the University of Hertfordshire, the start of success within the education sector

2005

Spirit of Enterprise Awards 2005 - Essex in Boom finalist

1999

Allwag Promotions founded by Angela and Alan Wagstaff

What are your thoughts on the BPMA?

If any BPMA members would like to give their opinions, suggestions, or comments on the Association, contact Angela on angela.wagstaff@bpma.co.uk.



The Allwag Promotions team day



midocean

Visit us at **Merchandise World stand 124**
30 and 31st of January 2019.



MO9609



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More than Gifts 2019. This season, midocean offers in addition to the normal collection, novelties that respond to the current trends and latest technology product developments. Pop along, or book an appointment and collect the new catalogue as well as see the new products.



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A SWEETER OUTCOME

A switch to biodegradable packaging has proved a big success for The Sweet People, but sourcing the right products is not simple says **Mandy Hastie**

The push for sustainable packaging has been totally market led – over the past year we have frequently been asked for a sustainable packaging option.

'Eco' packaging is not easy to find, and the choices are limited. We are currently working with two types of 'Eco' packaging: individual pots and flexible film.

The Eco pots have been used in the catering industry for some time and we identified them as being a great solution for filling with sweets and branding with a paper label. We launched the Eco pots in the summer and our demand outstripped the UK supply very quickly. We are now buying directly from the factory.

They are described as 100% plastic free and they are made from plant fibre. They are recyclable and industrial

compostable meaning they require oxygen, heat and organic substrate to biodegrade to biomass and carbon dioxide. They are not home compostable.

Importantly they are classed as a renewable source. This means they are made from a substance of economic value that can be replaced or replenished in the same or less time as it takes to draw the supply down.

The terminology and labelling that is used can be very confusing. The impact of plastic packaging and the environment is a big subject and to understand it fully we would need to run industry workshops for us all to gain a better understanding.

Having made a positive step towards offering the plastic free options we have been overwhelmed by the success of these options.



We will continue to look for environmentally friendly options and have now introduced a plastic free bubble wrap. As a company we are committed where possible to switch to environmentally friendly packaging solutions.

Mandy Hastie is managing director of The Sweet People

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NEW YEAR, NEW IDEAS

This month's Merchandise World promises to deliver new product inspiration to merchandise professionals and great business for exhibitors



With January, another sell out Merchandise World is upon us. The traditional curtain raiser to the year in merchandise provides the ideal opportunity for everyone involved with sales in professional distributor companies to see the new and best-selling promotional products.

The new year show, which is a joint venture between the BPMA and Sourcing City, makes a welcome return to Stoneleigh, home of the very first Merchandise World in 2017. Demand has been great for the UK's leading event for promotional merchandise professionals. The floor plan had to be extended to make room for the number of exhibitors who wanted to get involved, and the show is totally sold out.

More than 200 suppliers attend Merchandise World and each will be focused on presenting exciting products and delivering a valuable experience for all of the team members and management from the invited professional distributors.

It is expected that more than 1,000 business leaders and their front-line teams will attend the show hoping to see the latest and hottest promotional products for

Merchandise World essentials

- **Where** – NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG
- **When** – 30-31 January 2019. Doors open at 08.00 for breakfast on both days, with the show running from 09.00-17.00 on Day 1, and 09.00-16.00 on Day 2
- **Why** – more than 210 promotional suppliers will be exhibiting covering the gamut of merchandise. January is the main time when everyone involved with sales in professional distributor companies wish to see the new and best-selling promotional products. A high number of business leaders, together with their front-line teams are expected to attend in January, which is the perfect time to see the latest and hottest promotional products for the coming year.
- **How** – visitors can register at merchandise-world.co.uk. Shuttle buses will run from Coventry and Warwick train stations to the NAEC every 30 minutes on both days. There will also be a shuttle to the exhibition venue from Chesford Grange Hotel on both days.

the coming year. They will also discover the Merchandise World Promotional Product Award winners for 2019.

This year, there are more than 30 new exhibitors to meet at the show, including: Adproducts.com; Electric Gifts; Emblem Print Products; IF Solutions. Glenway Products; Imagineers; Matrix Sports, and



Don't miss the BPMA Awards on the first night of the show

more. Show sponsors include The Pen Warehouse; Notedeco; PF Concept; Premier Impressions; Eat My Logo, and Crazy Bags.

Another development is that the traditional show guide has been replaced with the Merchandise World app. The new MW App will carry all of the information that you would expect to find in a show guide and will also include additional features and dynamic information.

The key features of the Merchandise World App include:

- You can schedule your bookings ahead of the event in the easy to use 'Appointments Diary'. The Diary lets you plan your day and ensures you get to meet the key people you want to spend time with.
- Plan your trip using the 'Event Details' page (including opening times and information on the BPMA Awards Dinner).
- Plot your journey using the 'Travel Information' and 'Map & Directions' functions, which includes accurate details of airport transfers, free shuttle buses, hotel bookings and travel information.
- See who's attending in the comprehensive Exhibitors and Visitors lists. Read their company descriptions and view

their websites to help you prioritise which companies will benefit you the most during your visit.

- View the floorplan to identify the stand location of all the exhibitors.
- Check the latest news.
- Receive live updates, promotions, giveaways and event information.
- Exhibitors can advertise their stand and products with sponsorships and banner advertisements on the app so that visitors are aware you are there and given reasons to visit you.

Several new and exciting features are also currently in development. To download the Merchandise World app, visit your app store.

BPMA Awards dinner

The BPMA Awards will be held at Chesford Grange Hotel on the evening of 30 January. Voted for by people in the industry, and presented in front of 300 of your peers, the awards are one of the highlights of the year.

The 2019 categories are:

- **Supplier of the Year up to £2m**
- **Supplier of the Year £2m plus**
- **Distributor of the Year up to £500k**
- **Distributor of the Year up to £2m**
- **Distributor of the Year £2m - £5m**
- **Distributor of the Year £5m plus**
- **Marketing Campaign of the Year**
- **Supplier Unsung Hero**

The BPMA would like to thank its sponsors for 2019: Brand Addition, Geiger BTC, Preseli, PF Concept, Listawood, Direct Bags Group, Goldstar and Everythingbranded.co.uk. The event is also supported by Just a Drop, Crystal Galleries and The Sweet People.

Visit bpma.co.uk/events. For more information about any aspect of the awards, contact Daniela Arena daniela@bpma.co.uk



CELEBRATING WINNING PRODUCTS

With the start of the year buying season upon us, judges assembled to run the rule over the best of product media



Merchandise World Promotional Product Awards hit an all-time high this year with a record figure of 118 entries received. This year, the BPMA made entry even more inviting by introducing a first free entry for BPMA members and a reduced fee for Purple Club members.

The 10 categories for the 2019 awards were: Desk Product of the Year, Pocket Product of the Year, Executive Product of the Year, Edible Product of the Year, Eco Product of the Year, Promotional Pen of the Year, Promotional Bag of the Year, Technology Product of the Year, Most Innovative Product of the Year and

Textile Product of the Year. All categories received high entries, with the most popular category being for eco products.

The voting took place at the home of the Page Partnership in Warwick, and was kindly hosted by Brian Hayward. The judging panel was formed of catalogue groups and distributors:

- Brian Hayward – Page Partnership
- Lawrence Angelow – Advantage Group
- Richard Pettinger – Ignite Group
- Paul Green – Galpeg
- John Young – Mojo Promotions
- Angela Wagstaff – Allwag Promotions
- Elliot Sampson – Heartlands Business Gifts

THE 2019 PRODUCT WINNERS

Desk Product of the Year



Product - Smart Divoom Tivoo
Supplier - Will International



Executive Product of the Year



PLATINUM AWARD
Executive Product of the Year

Product: Real wood column award
Supplier - WCM&A



Edible Product of the Year



PLATINUM AWARD
Edible Product of the Year

Product - Oblong tin, clotted cream toffee
Supplier - Farrahs of Harrogate



Eco Product of the Year



PLATINUM AWARD
Eco Product of the Year

Product - E Leather recycled environmentally friendly notebook
Supplier - Juniper

Most Innovative Product of the Year

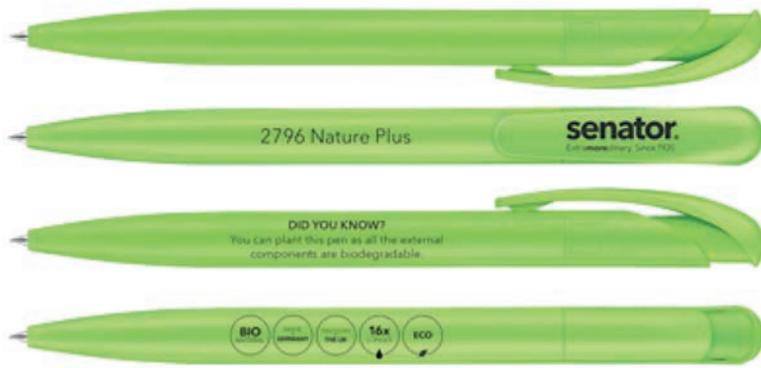


PLATINUM AWARD
Most Innovative Product of the Year

Product - W10 collapsible cup
Supplier - Premier Brands (Impressions)



Product Awards



Promotional Pen of the Year



Product - Senator 2796 Nature Plus biodegradable pen
Supplier - Senator Pens

Promotional Bag of the Year



Product - UK manufactured full colour tote bag
Supplier - Listawood



Technology Product of the Year



Product - E notebook
Supplier - Desktop Ideas



Textile Product of the Year



Pocket Product of the Year

Product - Octopus Booster
Supplier - Desktop Ideas



Product - Full colour towel
Supplier - Listawood

You can see the complete range of Merchandise World Promotional Products Awards 2019, including gold and silver winners, on the BPMA stand on 30-31 January at NAEC, Stoneleigh.

Pop along to see some of the best merchandise for the year ahead.

Thank you to everyone who took part. It was rewarding to see so many products be put forward and we look forward to seeing many of you at Merchandise World.





NEW PREMIER BRANDS.
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 MW2019
 STAND 165/166

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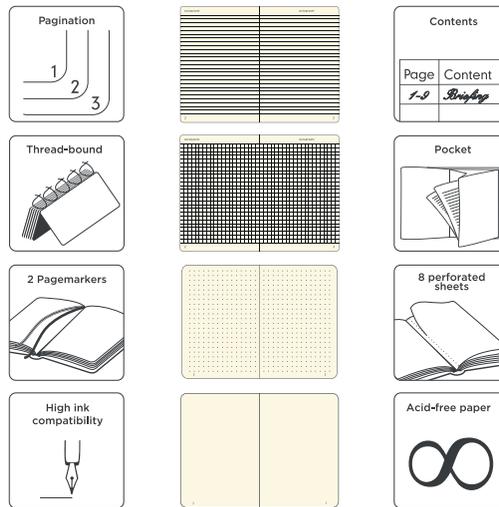
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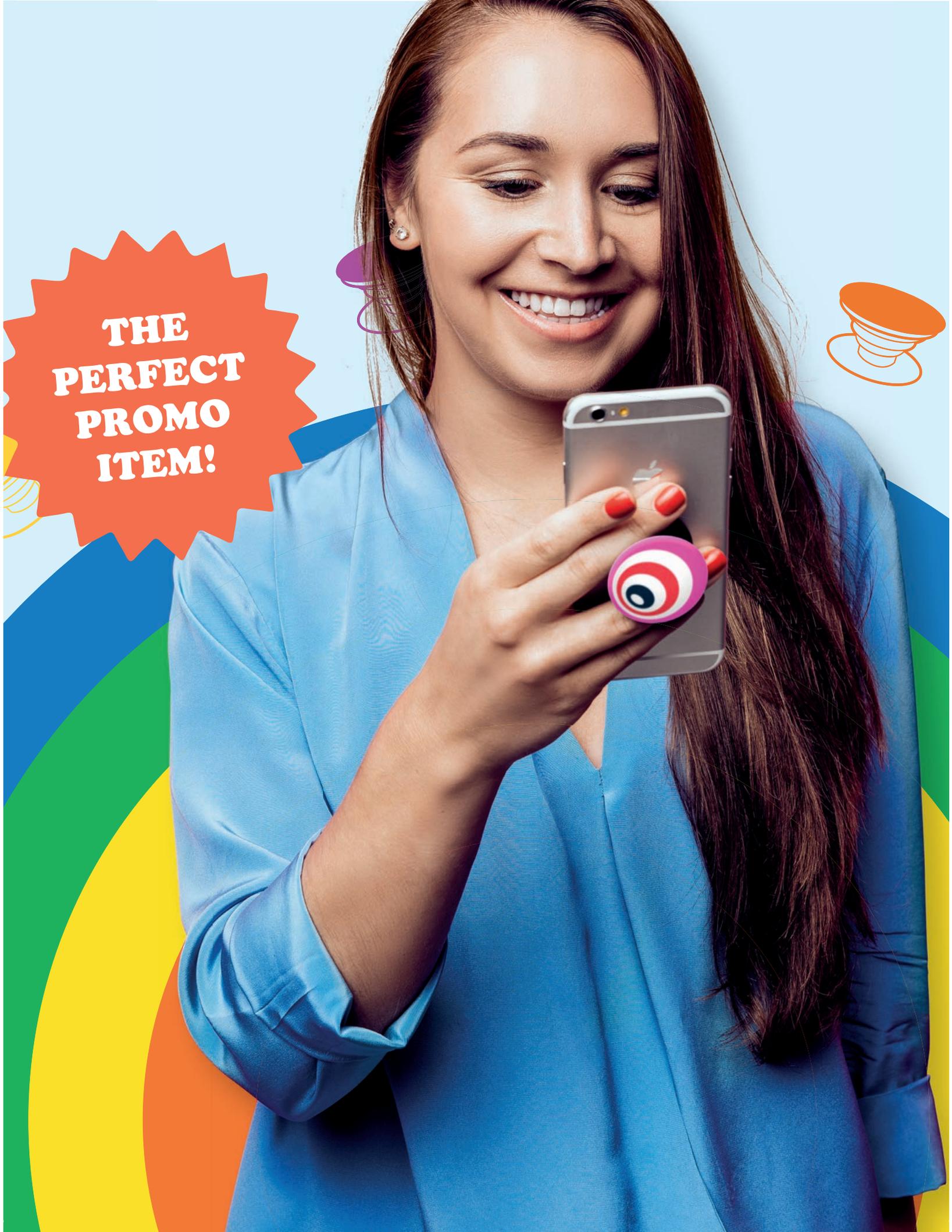


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BPMA EDUCATION DAY 2019

Venue: Chesford Grange, Stoneleigh

Date: 29th January 2019

Get clear on how to out-think, rather than out-spend, your competition.

A fun & practical full-day workshop for business leaders and those responsible for sales and marketing. Bring along your future stars too! This content works for both suppliers and distributors.

You will leave equipped with a proven thinking tool for ensuring sales & marketing delivers long-term profitable customer relationships. This means you can always think clearly about marketing, to make confident decisions about where precisely to focus your energy, and in what order.

We'll be exploring the following areas:

- ▶ How do people buy what you sell?
- ▶ How does marketing support sales results?
- ▶ Creating your priority plan.
- ▶ Ideas and actions.

You'll then leave with specific and achievable actions and a date by which to do it!

Other benefits:

You will be sent a link ahead of the session to complete a 15-minute survey about your marketing. This is used to build a profile unique to you, which will be delivered as a PDF. We will then analyse all the data to identify relevant topics for future BPMA events around your needs.

Webinar:

Analysis of this data will be used to prepare a follow-up webinar that all delegates will be invited to attend.

Tea/coffee on arrival at 10.00 with the workshop commencing at 10.30 until 16.30. Lunch is included.

TICKETS

£90 +vat
for BPMA members

£150 +vat
for non BPMA members

▶ To book your seat, please email daniela@bpma.co.uk

SPONSOR



GET IN WITH THE CROWD



LinkedIn is the leading platform for B2B social media connections but it can be intimidating. **Melissa Chevin** explains how to make it work

For most small businesses, the greatest obstacle to effective marketing is finding the budget for it. Yet if you don't spend a penny, guess what? You're unlikely to see any return.

This is the first in a series of articles I'll be writing about getting the most out of marketing on a limited budget. I'm going to be covering a number of the most familiar platforms, beginning with LinkedIn.

The platform now tops half a billion users in more than 200 countries and cannot be ignored. Here are some tips on putting that connectivity to your advantage.

Get personal

When looking at the list of 'people you may know', go to the person's profile page and click 'connect' there, which will then allow you to add a personal note. If you want to connect with someone you don't know personally, let them know why. Be cautious in this approach – if the connection is too tenuous and your invite is declined on more than a couple of occasions, LinkedIn will restrict you from trying to connect with more people.

Post often

When a connection likes, shares or comments on your status update, all of their connections are more likely to see your original post. If your content seems relevant, those '2nd degree connections'

may connect with you in turn. Posting frequently creates additional opportunities for engagement, thus syndicating your content across home page feeds everywhere. Don't be concerned about over-exposure by posting every day. LinkedIn's algorithms are complex meaning that your network isn't likely to see every post unless you publish an article natively with LinkedIn's article tool.

Share visuals

This can significantly boost engagement and exposure to potential connections. Research suggests that using visuals can increase views by a factor of up to 11 times over those with just links or plain text.

Engage with existing connections

This puts your profile directly in front of their networks – all it takes is a 'like' or comment on their posts.

Promote your LinkedIn URL

Remember, every other social media platform is a potential pathway to those who follow you on each one. Claim your vanity URL – and add your LinkedIn profile to your email signature.

Leverage keywords

Just as you'd optimise your website for SEO purposes, every word counts on LinkedIn too. Use them wisely.

Publish an article

Bringing your own insights and ideas to LinkedIn is a great way to be seen as a thought leader in your space. Your network will be notified every time you publish an article, increasing chances for engagement. Keep this activity at a sensible level, though – you don't want people tuning off.

Remember to occasionally download your connections too. After you've gone to the effort of building your network, you don't want to risk losing contact information. To do this, click on the Me' icon at the top of your LinkedIn profile, select Settings and Privacy from the dropdown, click the Privacy tab at the top of the page and under the How LinkedIn uses your data section, click Change next to Download your data where you can select Connections to download as a .CSV file. Now you have a file containing your contacts' first and last names, email addresses, job titles, and companies.

See you again soon – in the meantime, happy linking.

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



DRAINING EXPERIENCE

As we become more reliant on technology, the danger of running out of power is ever present. **Matt Pluckrose** explains how to stop feeling powerless



We have all been there. Exactly when you need your smartphone the most, the battery lets you down. Whether you were trying to make that new video to post on social media, trying to find your destination via maps or trying to contact your boss to solve a work problem. Panic soon sets in when we feel cut off and our phone battery dies.

So, what are the biggest battery drainers and how can we avoid the dead battery nightmare?

Streaming media

Videos and music unfortunately drain the battery of your phone the most. Understandably, you want to keep being entertained by your favourite series, videos and playlists while on the road or at home, but please consider that you are consuming a load of energy from your phone.

Products such as the 6,000 mAh Xoopar PowerBoard including silicone band and mini USB-C, Micro-USB and lightning cable can provide you with a power boost.

Background apps

Mobile apps you do not actively use but run in the background keep sending notifications on a regular basis. These apps can be just as energy draining as the apps you use.

With an ultra-strong solar power bank with 10,000 mAh at hand you will never have to worry about an empty battery again.

Searching for an active signal

Are you an active smartphone user and do you travel a lot? The chances are that your smartphone is constantly looking for an active Wi-Fi, Bluetooth or GPS signal. As soon as this is enabled in your phone, your battery may drain faster than you would wish for.

That is why you should try a credit card sized, ultra slim power bank that can supply you with a boost just when you need it most.

As with many things in life, it's all about being prepared. Luckily, there are plenty of power-related gadgets on the market that can be used as branded merchandise. And what better brand association than to come to the rescue of someone whose device is just about to lose function.

Matt Pluckrose is managing director of Desktop Ideas



By the windy Moons of Astroeus Ziggo, what's new?

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*5-day lead time is subject to quantity.

A SENSIBLE OPTION

With uncertainty surrounding Brexit and the threat of a no-deal, British manufactured promotional items offer stability, says **Mark Alderson**

The sense of the unknown surrounding Britain's future relationship with the European Union is causing headaches for British politicians and businessmen alike. Despite the Chequers deal being tabled, a recent survey of Britain's 250 top-performing companies indicated that 90% are continuing to make provisions for a no-deal.

Instability has resulted in extreme currency fluctuation especially in relation to the dollar. This has regularly shown variations up to 2% in a single 24-hour period. For many SMEs in our sector the biggest challenge facing them is managing the currency peaks and troughs. Unfortunately, there is no easy answer to this. If you build a safety net into your figures, you run

the risk of pricing yourself out of a deal, and if you price the transition keenly, you run the risk of being stung when exchange rates soar.

Another area of uncertainty affecting business is taxation. With no deal in place, docks and airports are unable to prepare themselves for the volume increase likely to result from Brexit. The lack of readiness and flexibility at these terminals was recently highlighted when a new computer system was installed at Felixstowe port. Designed to improve efficiency it caused utter chaos and weeks of delays. Of further concern is the fact that with 29 March 2019 fast approaching, HMRC appears to have no plans in place.

Sourcing promotional products from British manufacturers offers a simple solution to combatting some of the

effects of Brexit. Within the Briman Group a broad range of products is available including many bespoke options. Materials range from plastic and leather goods to metal products and a selection of edible treats.

As one member of the Briman Group commented: "Not only can we offer a fantastic range of bespoke options from UK stock, we offer unmatched lead times and most importantly can guarantee our prices. This has been especially useful when securing orders requiring numerous repeat orders."

For more information about these British made products please visit www.brimangroup.co.uk

Mark Alderson is chairman of the Briman Group. PM

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GET FINANCIALLY FIT FOR 2019

Resolve to be more financially alert in the year ahead by starting as you mean to go on, says **Mike Collins**



It's 2019. The start of a new year. Resolutions aplenty with most already broken (especially if they include diets and the gym). However, the start of any new year is always a good time to put a line in the sand and review your business. Marketing, sales, finance, and limiting your exposure to risk. You might not have put the latter on your review list, but it's the most important. It's the one that gets away as more pressing day to day issues absorb your time.

New year is the time to concentrate on servicing your clients to the hilt; maintaining relationships with your suppliers; looking at new products, and addressing new leaner ways of working. Indeed, bringing the spirit of Kaizen - the Japanese business philosophy of continuous improvement of working practices and personal efficiency - into every area of your business.

So, when it comes to exposure to risk, where do you start?

Take a long hard look at

the payment habits of your customers, on a customer by customer basis. Is there a particular customer taking longer and longer to pay you?

If so, make a note on your accounts system to flag them up as a concern and make them a priority for your credit control to contact first. The quicker you are to action a concern, the quicker you are to get paid.

Is there a particular customer who has consistently ordered goods, the value of which have gone beyond their agreed credit limit? Now is the time to conduct some credit and due diligence checks on that customer to ensure they're worthy of the extended credit limit you're giving them.

While making this decision, take an up to date credit report to ensure there's nothing for you to be concerned about. Sometimes a customer in financial trouble will consolidate their orders from various suppliers into one bigger order from one supplier simply because they're confident of being given the credit due to the pre-existing relationship. Or their

larger than usual orders have gone under the radar despite current limits being exceeded.

If they're good to go, write to them extending their credit limit. Your customer will appreciate the vote of confidence and may even order more. If additional credit is not advisable, flag them up on your system and every time they go past their limit, contact them immediately and ask for payment to bring them back in line.

While you are looking at your exposure to risk, take a look at all those customers that haven't

ordered from you for some time. If they are still credit worthy and their credit reports are positive, get in touch. Remind them you are ready and waiting to service them again, to show them the latest products and offers. Don't assume that their silence means they're no longer interested.

And finally, if you need any help, guidance and support with regards to risk and recoveries in general we are waiting to hear from you as your approved BPMA credit management provider.

Happy New Year!

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CARDBOARD



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The new BalloonGrippa and our natural rubber latex balloons are made from sustainable raw materials and will

biodegrade. Available in stock colours and designs or can be customised (MOQs apply). The BalloonGrippa comes flat-packed, saving packaging, and is easily folded to make a balloon holder as an alternative to plastic sticks. Also, suitable for retail packs.

B-LOONY

www.b-loony.co.uk

01494 774 376

B-Loony Design Rights & Patent Application 1811170.8 Pending

MOVE WITH THE TIMES

After building a reputation with timepieces, **Oldeani** has adapted to changing markets

Chelmsford-based Oldeani recently celebrated 30 years in business, a period that has seen the company evolve from its original focus supplying watches and clocks to a wider product position.

Founder Malcolm Fritschy admits he almost started the business by accident. Born in Kenya, and a Swiss national, he was working in the watch trade after doing his national service in Switzerland. A contact wanted to get hold of bespoke watches, but didn't know how. In stepped Fritschy, who soon realised that there was a gap in the market. Oldeani, named after a place near where Fritschy's father was born in Tanzania, was soon filling this gap.

"At one stage, we were doing around 500,000 watches a year," he says. "I've always had a fascination for design, and this, and our attention to detail, became our USP."

However, markets changes, and the internet and mobile technology led to a decline in timepiece sales. It also opened up new opportunities. Oldeani is now probably best known for its quality gadgets and premium sports bottles. The link has always been with quality and precision, says Fritschy.

"We are busier than ever. The launch of our sports bottles range in 2017 has been extremely successful and led to us now importing tens of thousands of bottles at a time. We've maintained the same high standards on materials and design as with electronics and watches and it's worked."

An important element of this drive for quality is the importance of compliance. Oldeani works closely with audited factories to ensure that clients don't end up on the wrong side of a 'merchandise gone wrong' story.

"Clients want to see that they are dealing with responsible people. The move towards compliance has probably been the biggest change in the 30 years that we've been in



business. Generally, people are more responsible," he says.

Fritschy adds that the BPMA has played an important part in bringing about this change in attitude. Being a member of a professional association which implements strict quality standards and codes of practice, increases distributors' confidence in their supply chain and products they purchase.

"One of the key benefits of joining the BPMA is the ability to support the mission of the organisation and possibly influence legislation that affects the industry," he says. "Being a member of the BPMA means immediate access to any news or developments that affect our industry."

Like many small teams, Oldeani prides itself on a personal approach. "We work together and all understand the entire business," says Fritschy. "All of our staff have been with us for years so know our business inside out. Seeing something new and knowing which clients will love it is a great feeling."

In terms of current trends, healthcare promotions are big going into the New Year, says Fritschy. Outside influences like the proposed 'coffee cup levy' have meant many companies are looking at reusable drinkware and clients are demanding transparency in terms of materials, compliance and standards.

Other opportunities will arise around specific events

such as this year's Rugby World Cup, and Brexit will play a role, he predicts.

"We will obviously have to wait to see the effects of Brexit on the industry and adapt accordingly to both

the challenges and potential openings it may bring," he says.

For a company that has shown adaptability over its history, change may not present too much of a problem. **PM**

MORE THAN BAGS AT MERCHANDISE WORLD

Bagco will be taking the wraps off a host of new offerings at this year's Merchandise World.

The company is best known for its specialist range of trade only branded bags, and there will be plenty of these on show with 41 new items across 14 all-new product ranges.

The company offers the largest, deepest collection of bags of any independent specialist supplier in the industry, with a variety of colours and price points. Equally importantly, many of the models boast great eco credentials and are fully compliant.

But Bagco isn't just about bags. The company's popular range of notebooks will also be very much to the fore at the show, introducing new models, new colourways and finishes in Bagco's popular soft-feel, craft paper and eco ranges, all precision branded and competitively priced.

Bagco also has another trick up its sleeve which will be launched

at this show. Let's just say it should prove to be a 'breath of fresh air'.

If all the above doesn't sound tempting enough, Bagco is also offering distributor visitors to the stand an opportunity to enter a free draw towards a great getaway. The winner will receive vouchers redeemable against holidays, mini-breaks, theatre trips or even a trip to the spa.

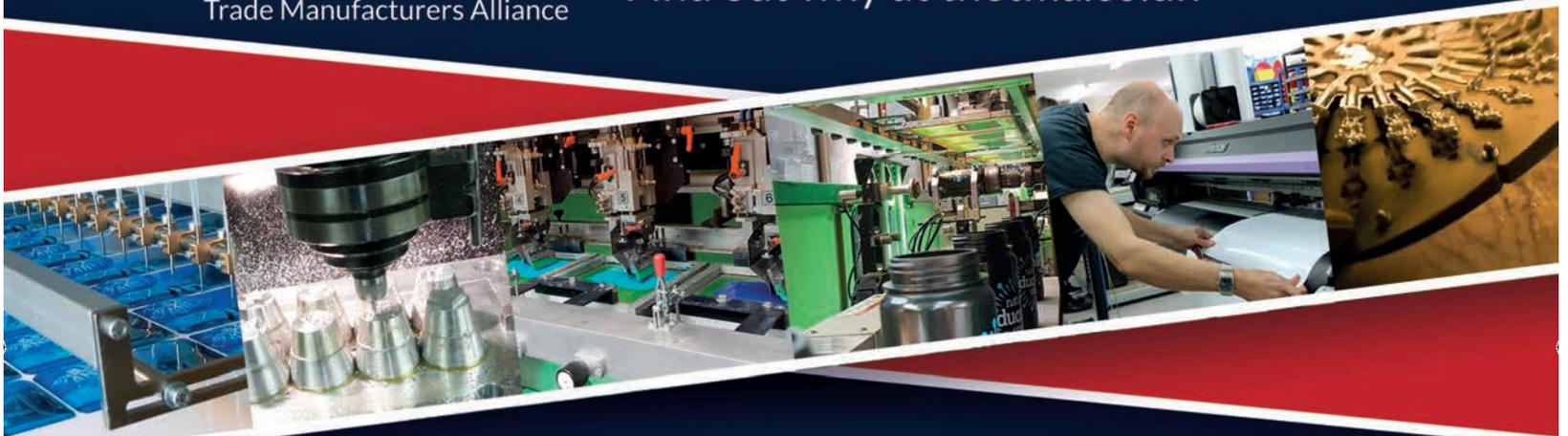
To see the whole picture, be sure to visit Bagco on stand 60, and for more details, visit bag-co.co.uk.



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For further information, a brochure from 1 or more companies or to arrange a sales visit, please contact Martyn Wood tel: 07575 249949 email: martyn@thetma.co.uk



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Stand 82



Merchandise World
Stand 87



Merchandise World
Stand 88



Merchandise World
Stand 89



Merchandise World
Stand 88A



KING PINS

Dectek has launched trade only name badges exclusive to BPMA distributors

Dectek, the South Wales based print manufacturer known for 'all things doming', has launched its newly developed, trade only, name badge range with supporting commercial strategy. The proposition offers distributors easy to understand products and ensures a competitive edge in the wider market, while retaining an achievable working profit margin. The name badge selection has been curated to maximise sales and includes recyclable plastic and new to Dectek, laser cut metal and wood designs.

In an endorsement of the BPMA and its relevance and importance to the corporate gift industry, Dectek has taken the innovative step of limiting the supply of its trade only name badge range to the community of member distributors. This is an exciting step and one Dectek hopes will be replicated by other suppliers in the future.

"When I started planning our approach to the market, I wanted to make the proposition exclusive to the elite distributors in the channel. The distributors that add the most value and will engage with us in a strong and profitable strategic partnership," said David Carter, Dectek's business development manager. "The BPMA distributor network ticks every box in this aspiration. Limiting our programme

to fewer power distributors ensures the opportunity is of the greatest value."

Carter added: "Our new range of print, dome and cutting capabilities facilitate almost limitless product design avenues and we will be rapidly expanding our product portfolio, beyond badges, throughout this year and into next; offering our power distributors highly valuable and lucrative business growth opportunities. Furthermore, new technology arriving in the business very soon will revolutionise aspects of our manufacturing process, offering our partners an enhanced service proposition."

He concluded: "As the market for name badges continues to evolve, distributors need a strong, commercially focussed and forward thinking trade manufacturing partner."

Dectek is currently the UK market leader for domed labels and manufactures around one and a half million each month. The company has significant investment in place for a new purpose-built manufacturing facility and targets doubling its business in the next three years.

"I am extremely excited for the future," said Mike Beese, Dectek managing director. "Dectek's door is always open and I personally extend an invitation to prospective partners to come and see our business in action."

How to build a profitable business partnership



1. Cut along the dotted line
2. Rotate 180 degrees

Does your trade name badge supplier support you with...

An easy to understand, simple price structure?

Aggressive 'quote winning' market relevant pricing?

An easy to sell and understand product range?

Trade only products limited to BPMA distributors?

Fair delivery charges?

Your own branded sample packs to grow sales?

FREE pre-production samples? *

FREE prospecting samples? *

A 'can do' approach to increase your market share?

A unique end of life upcycle programme?

A low cost monthly subscription to cover ALL origination charges and postage of samples?

We really need to talk!

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TIME FOR ACTION

Imagine an education event where you leave with time-specific and achievable actions. That's the **BPMA Education Day**

Deciding on content that is suitable for both suppliers and distributors, and relevant for the highest level MDs and business owners, as well as the customer facing sales teams, marketing teams and future leaders is no easy task. This year, however, our workshop and training style Education Day will be fun, practical and engaging and perfect for all levels managing, overseeing or contributing to sales and/or marketing.

Common language

MDs or business owners can learn a common language, clear priorities and sales-focussed thinking. They will be able to clearly visualise the end-to-end sales journey, and the elements that come together to create a scalable, profitable, sales and marketing operation. They'll find a way of talking about marketing that engages the whole team, discovering a tool that can be used in the business to periodically re-focus on marketing priorities that underpin sales results.

Marketing teams who attend can learn how to get their team on board with marketing investments, working towards this common language for expressing the strategic value of marketing to their business. They'll learn a technique that can be used to underpin creative collaboration from others in their team and enable them to quickly



sort all the competing marketing ideas in the business into a 'Do it, Delay it, Ditch it' list.

Sales teams should also be there discussing the tools they really need to support every step of the sale, again finding a language for expressing what they need from marketing to support the business in delivering sales results. They'll understand where any frustrations with marketing come from, and how to unblock the potential of sales and marketing working effectively together.

Next generation

Bring along the rising stars in your team too. Invest in their growth and they'll learn how sales and marketing fit together getting a clear view of how people move through buying decisions. This will help them to visualise the interplay between sales and marketing to see where the business can add value.

Personalised approach

Also, in the run up to the Education Day, delegates will be sent a link to complete a 15-minute survey about their marketing and how they perceive their marketing. This will be used to build a unique profile. We will then analyse all the data to produce a report for the BPMA that shows us the areas in the sales process that are most, and least, well supported by our members. This will help to highlight where our members might need additional expertise and guidance to step things up. We can then use this data for developing further education content.

If that's not enough, we'll also be continuing the momentum by using the analysis to prepare a follow-up webinar for the delegates.

Delegates can also get 25 credits towards their BPMA Education Programme TPM, CPM or MPM qualifications. 

**Education Day is held on
29 January 2019 at
Chesford Grange.
Book your place now and
find out more by contacting
daniela@bpma.co.uk.
We look forward to
seeing you there.**

GET ON THE

The BPMA's Fast Track education programme gets learners off to a flying start but lets them set the pace

It's easy to put off until tomorrow that which you don't think you have time for today. It's especially the case for career development which can easily be deprioritised in the face of seemingly more critical day to day issues.

That is why the BPMA developed its programme. The idea behind the Fast Track programme is to help individuals create the time for learning and to deliver a hard-hitting educational punch, explains Daniela Arena, head of education and best practice, BPMA.

"Through conversations with our members, we know that the biggest inhibitor to training staff is the perception that it will take too much time and is costly. We understand that training staff can be time-consuming for managers, so we launched the Fast Track programme to give learners a blended learning experience within a shorter time frame – giving them a start, middle point and end to their particular course."

As part of the Fast Track educational programme, learners are given a behind the scenes look at what happens at the coal face of branding, with a series of informative, and fun, factory visits.

Learners attend an introductory seminar, attend



2018 graduates received their BPMA TPM certificates in a ceremony at The Royal Air Force Club







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FAST TRACK



A branding demonstration during a factory visit

factory visits and log into the training portal to study a series of content, before sitting an invigilated exam. Learners are still in control and have to be self-disciplined, but they have the flexibility to study at the office or at home in the evenings and benefit from industry specific training all within a short time frame but without jeopardising the quality of the learning.

Launched last year for its TPM (Trained in Promotional Merchandise) learners, the Fast Track programme is running again from February and again makes great use of factory visits to impart knowledge quickly and practically. The visits are a highlight of the learning journey and complement the content for the TPM level qualification, allowing

learners to engage with suppliers, see theory put into practice and gain hands-on production experience.

Fast Track learners have to collect 125 credits for the TPM course before sitting an exam to test what they have learned. Graduates attend a ceremony to celebrate their success – last year it was held at the RAF Club.

Some companies are now using the TPM (Trained in Promotional Merchandise course) as part of an induction programme for all new staff. Progress reports and a learning charter document can be provided to you to monitor the development.

To discuss this further please contact Daniela Arena, head of education & best practice, BPMA - daniela@bpma.co.uk



Students see processes up close

WHAT THE FAST TRACKERS THINK

"Great chance to meet other suppliers and hear about their evolution and learn about their production methods."

Matthew Metcalf, Headwear UK

"Really worthwhile factory visit, has really given me some good ideas on options for these products. Recommend!"

Ryan Finnerty, The TC Group

"Really informative and interesting tour. In depth and very educational."

Will Robins, Prombox

"Understanding how products are made makes it so much easier to communicate with customers and improve their end results."

Christopher Smith, Vibrant Colour.

STRESSED BALLS



A Facebook group for the UK promotional products industry.

A place where we can discuss how to promote our great industry, learn how to improve our businesses, and have a little fun along the way.

Are you in?

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Facebook.com/Groups/StressedBalls

FAST TRACK FEBRUARY



BPMA Education Programme

Enrol on the TPM course by the 31st January and have the opportunity to...

- Book to attend the Introductory Seminar – 7th February 2019
- Take part in Factory visits throughout February
- Achieve your qualification by 1st March
- Attend a graduation ceremony in Spring 2019

➤ Register by 31st January 2019

www.education.bpma.co.uk

For more information and to sign up contact, education@bpma.co.uk or call 0203 875 7942





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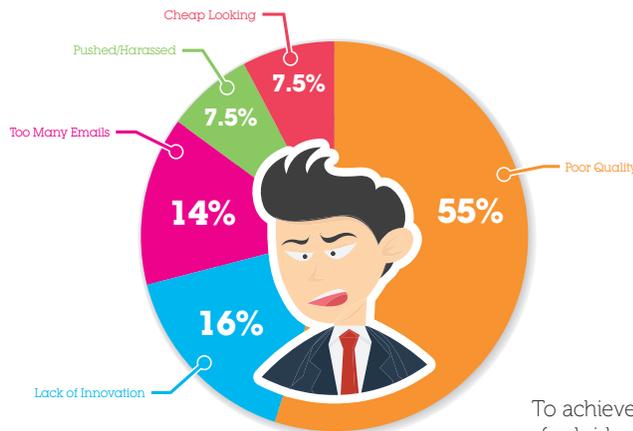
The BPMA End User group wants to raise the profile of branded promotional merchandise, and you can help

As merchandise professionals we are well aware of the power of product media to influence customers, motivate staff, and to help communicate a message. Which is great. However, to stop us preaching to the converted who have already bought into merchandise as a marketing tool, we have to keep getting our message out to those who may be less familiar with its benefits.

That is why the BPMA has formed an end user group. This is a group of proactive BPMA distributors that wants to communicate with customers and show the benefits of promotional merchandise over and above any other medium.

It is important that we raise awareness of the power of promotional merchandise in a creative way and drive research to find out more about our end users and their buying habits to grow our industry. We also want to support the sustainability and compliance messaging too, ensuring we communicate to key buyers, press and a wider audience that quality is paramount.

In doing so, we also want to promote the advantages of buying from a BPMA



member to show the importance of professionalism and compliance when choosing merchandise. Peace of mind and brand security are issues close to the heart of all end users, and we want to show that our members share these interests.

The end user group also wants to improve the way we communicate in the digital world, to make sure we engage with modern buyers, understanding and addressing their needs.

BPMA end user research helps to better understand the needs and wants of those who purchase promotional merchandise. This graphic shows common annoyances when buying promotional products

To achieve this, the group will be working on fresh ideas and new initiatives and we need your help. We would love to hear from any business owners, marketers or other members with an understanding of end user buyer behaviour. If you were an end user buyer in your previous role, get in contact.

To find out more about how you can get involved with the BPMA End User group, contact Angela Wagstaff for a further discussion about what is involved and what you will get out of it. Contact Angela on angela.wagstaff@bpma.co.uk

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Birrell explains the value of giving on BBC show

Jon Birrell, the BPMA CEO, recently took part in a BBC World Service radio programme called The Why Factor. The programme, which is to be broadcast later in the year examined the complexities around giving presents.

As an industry expert, Birrell was invited to talk about promotional gifts having the ability to trigger an emotional reaction, resulting in a smile and a 'thank you' from the recipient. "Companies are very happy to create this level of positive feelings associated with their brands," he said. "Compare this reaction to other forms of media that are here today and gone tomorrow. Promotional gifts deliver one of the most effective 'cost per impression' ratios."

The programme touched on recent trends such as the fidget spinner and spikes in demand, for example around World Cup related items. It also looked at the current trend for a rapidly increasing



demand for reusable water bottles, coffee cups and drinkware to combat single use plastics. "Brands love these products as they deliver a positive message about sustainability at a time when consumers are becoming more environmentally aware," he said.

Asked what makes a good promotional gift, Birrell said that it depends on the reason why a promotional item is being used, but in most

cases an item that is functional and useful will be kept.

"The traditional best sellers are bags, pens and mugs. All of these items will be used regularly, generating many logo impressions every time they are seen," he said. "It is important, however, that the selected product is appropriate for the message and also the target market. The product needs to reflect the brand values, so giving a low cost pen to a valued and loyal VIP customer will portray the wrong message, whereas a higher end branded pen, gift set or hamper would be more appropriate."



Introducing: Brandelity

Managing director, Chris Love (below) gives the lowdown on his business

Give us a snapshot of the business

Brandelity is a promotional product specialist with an emphasis on service. The promotional gift industry is full of companies that commoditise corporate gifts, with little or no thought to customer experience and perceived value. We are different. We offer a personal service where we don't just print your logo on any old product, we pick the right products for both your brand and your target market. We partner with our clients and help them to establish a corporate gift strategy that achieves the greatest possible impact using products and ideas that are creative, fun and inspiring.

What made you join the BPMA?

The BPMA is a great place to network and being a member offers an excellent way to stay abreast of market trends.

How's business at the moment?

We've had a very busy year. We've moved to new offices in London, grown and strengthened our product offering and most importantly, we have focused on becoming a much more customer centric business. We no longer talk about orders, we talk about customers.



What is your favourite promotional product?

Our Verona stainless steel drinks bottle is the most popular item with clients, but for me it has to be the wireless charging mat as it offers everything you'd want from a promotional product. It has a high perceived value, a large flat print area, lives on the desk top, it's modern and the end-user engages with it multiple times every day.

What trends are you noticing?

Lots of distributors are automating their service which I don't think is the way forward as

it commoditises the products they sell as well as removing any customer service and experience. Now, more than ever, service is crucial for nurturing true customer lifetime value. There are some elements of a business that should never be automated.

Give us a prediction for the year ahead in merchandise?

Reusable drinkware and bags will continue to be at the forefront and in particular, those made from sustainable materials. Brands will increasingly want to distance themselves from plastic as these items are not only seen as environmentally damaging but also as being low in quality.

Chris Love,
Managing Director
@Brandelity



New team presented at BPMA AGM

The 15th British Promotional Merchandise Association's Annual General Meeting was held at The London Mathematical Society, Russell Square on Wednesday 7th November 2018.

Graeme Smith opened his chairman's review by summarising industry challenges and opportunities, the successful Merchandise World shows, research, member benefits, education, events for 2018 and 2019 and more, including the BPMA's *Product Media* magazine which is now the principle magazine for the industry and continuing to grow.

At the AGM, the financials for year ending May 2018 were presented by Alex Turner and unanimously approved.

On a proposal by the board the following officers were unanimously confirmed: Graeme Smith as president, Angela Wagstaff as chairman and Alex Turner as vice chair and finance director.

Having been vice chair for the last two years, Wagstaff commented: "I am delighted to step into the role of chairman and I look forward to new beginnings with our highly experienced board and a new CEO at the secretariat. I would like to thank Graeme for his hard work and dedication during his term as chairman."

The BPMA also welcomed a further four new board directors, namely Mark Alderson of First Editions; Helen Brennan, Brand Addition; Andrew Langley, Juniper Products, and Haydn Willetts, Mid Ocean Brands. They all bring with them a wealth of invaluable industry knowledge and experience.

All members were invited to attend the AGM and the BPMA were pleased to welcome representatives from Galpeg, Print Kick, Innerworkings and Sow Easy. The BPMA encourages more members to attend the next AGM.

In his new role as CEO, this was Jon Birrell's first AGM. He said: "This is an exciting time for the BPMA with a fresh pair of eyes at the secretariat and also the board. I look forward to working with Angela and the board on the strategic direction of the association."

BPMA members requiring more information regarding the AGM should email daniela@bpma.co.uk



Helen Brennan

Helen Brennan is European Purchasing Manager at Brand Addition. She has more than 17 years' experience in the industry and brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the board. She has been a buyer in both retail and manufacturing, including being responsible for the direct marketing and corporate division at 4imprint, and more recently as Brand Addition. She works closely with the supply chain to provide essential, innovative and compliant products to the client base.



Haydn Willetts

Haydn Willetts is regional director for the UK and Ireland at Mid Ocean Brands and has been in the industry since 1992. He spent eight years at Parker Pens selling to end users, four years at PF Concept, and has been with Mid Ocean for 12 years.



He said he was looking to assist, reinforce and continue to raise awareness of the work that the BPMA carries out on behalf of and for the industry. "I think the time of joining the BPMA board is key in what could be a pivotal period in our industry's history."

Andrew Langley

Andrew Langley has been co-owner of Juniper Products since 2003, during which time the company has successfully grown to 40 staff. Langley brings a wealth of experience with UK manufacturing and international production.



He is looking forward to working closely with the BPMA board and share his experience in the industry to help the Association grow and widen awareness of why brands should buy quality merchandise through professional distributors, supported by compliant and quality suppliers.

Mark Alderson

In the six years Mark Alderson has been with First Editions he has overseen considerable expansion and development of the business. This evolution incorporated large machinery investments including Europe's first rotary digital print machine. The technological advances made into rotary digital printing were recognised by the British Plastic Federation which awarded him the Horners Bottlemakers award in 2017.



Alderson has chaired the BPMA's special interest group, Briman, since its creation. His role within the BPMA is to promote the benefits of buying British made products through education and end user engagement. In addition to his involvement with Briman, Mark is also a member of the BPMA supplier committee which works hard to support suppliers and share best practice.



BPMA members aid young people charities

With the season of good cheer just celebrated, BPMA members were again making sure that they were helping those less fortunate.

Three members of the Scanglo team slept rough for a night outside Norwich City FC to raise awareness of youth homelessness in support of local charity The Benjamin Foundation.

Director Matthew Lake, head of small print production, Aaron Strathearn, and sales and business development manager, James Martin took to their sleeping bags, blankets and cardboard to experience for one night only what others face on a daily basis.

The Benjamin Foundation provides a home and support to more than 100 vulnerable young adults each night giving them stability and the life

skills they need to forge an independent life off the streets.

Meanwhile, the Promo Trade family recently took part in Windsor's Santa Dash, for their chosen charity Alexander Devine, a children's hospice service. The charity was founded in 2007 with the aim of providing a dedicated hospice for all children with life limiting and life-threatening illnesses in Berkshire and beyond.

Alexander Devine has opened a hospice in Maidenhead, just down the road from Promo Trade HQ. Although the construction is complete, Alexander Devine still needs help raising money to fund the equipment and furnishings within the hospice as well as its staff.

Every year Alexander Devine hosts the Santa Dash in Windsor to help fund its work.

Patrons dinner

The BPMA held its bi-annual Patrons Dinner in November 2018 at the Aqua restaurant in The Shard, London.

The evening was hosted by newly appointed CEO Jon Birrell and newly appointed chairman Angela Wagstaff and was attended by 15 guests from the Patronage. Wagstaff delivered a welcome address highlighting that 2019 would be a period of change for the Association and that the BPMA wanted to work closely with the Patrons and specialist groups to ensure the industry continues to move forward.

Birrell shared with guests his wealth of experience and his objectives for the BPMA and his new role over the coming months. He announced that a membership survey will be released in the new year to understand members' perception and relationship with the BPMA so that he can ensure radical changes are made for the members.

At the dinner Patrons shared their views on end-user engagement, millennial selling and marketing, research and the value proposition of BPMA membership.

BPMA Patrons are: TC Branding Group, Mojo Promotions, Prominate, Marke Creative Merchandise, Fluid Branding, Innerworkings, Brand Addition, LRG International, Arcadia, WCM&A, PF Concept, PenCarrie, Listawood, Preseli and BTC Activewear.

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bpma

BPMA news



If you have any stories for Product Media Magazine, send by email to: editor@productmediamagazine.co.uk

BPMA CALENDAR

2019

8-10 January
PSI, Dusseldorf

29 January
BPMA Education Day, Chesford Grange Hotel

30 January
BPMA Awards, Chesford Grange Hotel

30-31 January
Merchandise World, NAEC, Stoneleigh

12 February
Senator Pens factory visit, Harlow

27-28 March
B2B Marketing Expo, Excel, London

6-7 March
Marketing Week Live, Olympia West, London



Merchandise World data is never for sale

It has been brought to the attention of the exhibition organisers that a company is claiming to be selling a visitors list relating to Merchandise World 2019. The organisers have stated that Merchandise World does not, and never will, sell any data connected to Merchandise World.

Emails promoting this sale are from nile.smith@etecbizleads.com and lucy.maria@etecbizleads.com. The emails contain no address or telephone contact details and the website www.etecbizleads.com contains nothing explaining who or what the business is.

Merchandise World has requested immediate written assurance that the company refrains from selling any data relating to Merchandise World, and destroy whatever it is it claims to hold relating to Merchandise World.

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If you have any stories for Product Media Magazine, send by email to: editor@productmediamagazine.co.uk

Ten from two



Emma Filby

account manager,
Cyan Group

What boxset are you watching and what's next?

Vikings season 4 followed by Vikings season 5

Do you have a guilty pleasure?

With *Product Media* in mind, it might not be considered 'guilty', but I do love pens. I take great pride in knowing the particular make and model of a pen and am pretty particular when it comes to the pens I use myself (this can extend to pencils and other writing stationery too!)

What was your first job in promotional merchandise and what did it teach you?

Client support executive at Cyan Group, Five-and-a-half years, a few job titles and a couple of BPMA qualifications later, I'm still here. The amount I've learnt about the industry and business in general has been immense. I'm still learning every day, and that's what keeps it exciting

Best piece of advice you've been given?

Never be afraid to laugh at yourself. After all, you could be missing out on the joke of the century

What's the view from your office?

On a good day, the Wembley arches

How do you relax outside of work?

Doing something arty/crafty, watching rugby, or eating and drinking with friends

Where would you like to be right now?

At the top of a snowy mountain

How do your colleagues describe you?

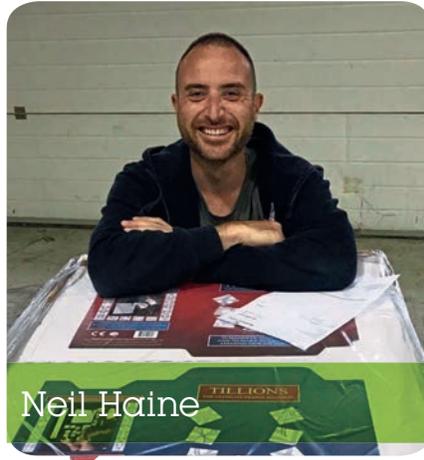
Enthusiastic, full of fun and great for a night out. Oh, and apparently quite good at my job

What has been the toughest decision you've had to make, and how did you make it?

I find the strangest of decisions tough, like what toothbrush to buy. The decisions that really matter are easier. I think it's really important to trust your instincts or just choose the orange one

What's top of your bucket list?

Travel to every continent in the world (not necessarily all in one trip)



Neil Haine

operations manager,
Foremost Magnets

What boxset are you watching and what's next?

I have kids so we are watching series 256 of *In the Night Garden*. Next, I suspect it will be series 257

Do you have a guilty pleasure?

Dolly Parton, Working 9-5 What a Way to Make a Living...

What was your first job in promotional merchandise and what did it teach you?

I started out as a machine operator which taught me that I needed to not be a machine operator for much longer

Best piece of advice you've been given?

That Dance with Wolves would win the 2.55 at Plumpton in 2007

What's the view from your office?

My very delightful sales team

How do you relax outside of work?

Diazeepam

Where would you like to be right now?

The Red Lion

How do your colleagues describe you?

Doable

What has been the toughest decision you've had to make, and how did you make it?

I was down to my last £20 and had to decide red or black, so I flipped a coin

What's top of your bucket list?

10 litre galvanised steel bucket with a super grip handle

People

Dual role for Dyl

The Pen Warehouse and Snap Products have appointed Matt Dyl as national sales manager.

Dyl comes from a background in digital printing and business development, having previously worked his way up through the ranks of a large format print company, and overseen the transformation of a small print company into a major player.

Having lived in South Africa for the past nine years, Dyl is pleased to return to his native UK to work with companies that have shown growth over the years.

"I'm confident there is more opportunity to pursue and potential still to be tapped into," he said of his new role. "I'm excited to make my mark on both companies and drive further growth."



Luna looks to shine



Luna Marcus has joined Mansfield business gifts and promotional merchandise company, Pellacraft as an order processor.

She is combining her new role with completing a business administration apprenticeship.

Marcus previously worked within the asbestos department of Derby-based health and safety consultancy Marpal where she accompanied colleagues on building surveys and fire risk assessments. This role gave her responsibility for ensuring everything has been accounted for and that companies were complying with regulations.

She said: "I have never worked in the world of promotional merchandise before, but I truly feel that I will learn a lot from my colleagues. The overall energy and attitude of everyone that I work with has made me want to work better and harder in order for us to maintain the outstanding reputation that every employee within Pellacraft has worked so hard to build."



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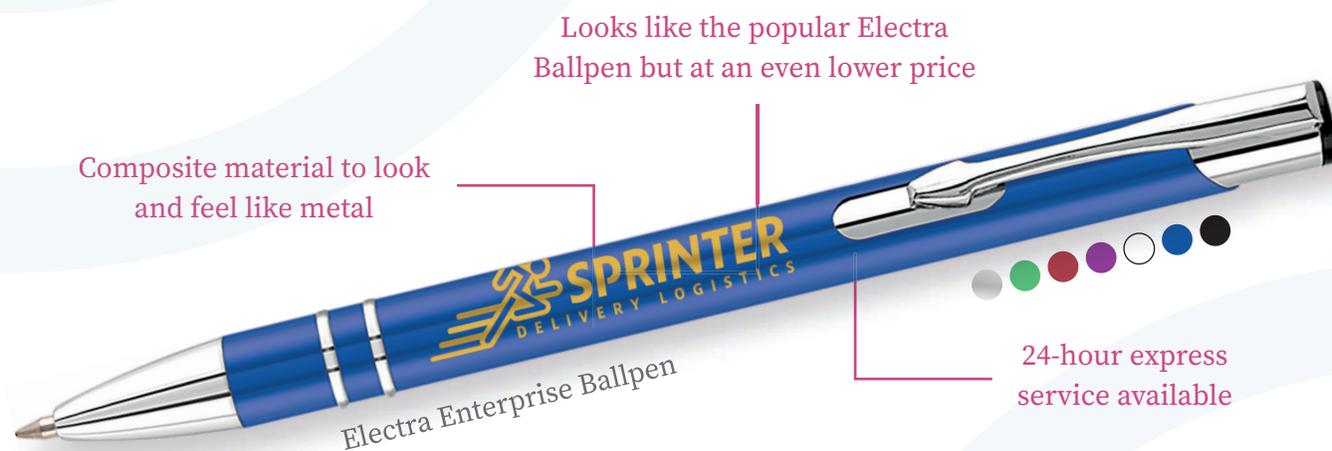
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