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WELCOME



Who knew we would be this far through the year without knowing what Brexit was going to look like! For those businesses out there who still plan to look at their options, the Institute

of Export is offering Brexit Healthchecks and the BPMA has negotiated a £400 special discount for members. Find out more on page 38 or contact Daniela@bpma.co.uk for details.

We'll be going into more detail regarding how Brexit affects product compliance over the coming months, but I have had a number of calls from members over the last few weeks regarding EN71 in particular. Our contact at SGS highlights the reasons why EN71 should be on your radar on page 39.

The BPMA exists not only to support the members with their promotional merchandise activities but also recognise

that our members are businesses and at their heart are their valued staff. We held two Mental Health seminars in June to raise awareness and help business owners and managers understand why mental health matters and what they can do to support their team. The feedback has been fantastic so we will be continuing the momentum and creating some useful resources as this is a topic that affects many members.

One of our other events was this year's BPMA Golf Day at the fabulous Burnham Beeches Golf Club. I'd like to say a big thank you to Clive Allcott from Screen Works for organising the event. You can see who the winners were on page 19.

Following on from the BPMA Education Day earlier this year, Bryony Thomas has analysed the survey results through her 'Touchpoint Leaks' framework and talks about where our members need to focus on their marketing efforts on page 20.

We have created an A-Z for

Clothing in this issue. With so many options available from off the shelf to bespoke, it's the perfect way for your clients to turn their staff into walking advertisements. Don't just think 'promotional', ask your clients about uniform requirements for their staff.

It's not long until Merchandise World! In addition to Branding World this September we have an exciting new twist, introducing Eco World where you'll be able to see the latest environmentally friendly and sustainable products. It's set to be a great show so book your stands if you haven't already.

I'm also setting up a BPMA Eco Group to look at ways to make our industry sustainable both in terms of the products that we supply and the businesses that form our membership. Look out for my communications or contact me to participate.

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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Export drive helps AMT land trade award

Guildford merchandise company, AMT Marketing, has won the Queen's Award for International Trade for Outstanding Short-Term Growth.

The company was established in 1996 when the founder Andrew Turner was given a kite as a present and realised that it would make a fantastic promotional gift. Within a year he had sold thousands of personalised kites.

AMT has gone from strength to strength, with many more promotional items being added to

the range from sports merchandise to reusable coffee cups.

In recent years, AMT has embraced international trade and is constantly expanding its client portfolio of global companies. Exporting has become an important part of the business model. The company claims its strengths lie in its confidence to diversify and keep up to date with new products, manufacturing processes and printing techniques, alongside the ever-changing processes in logistics.

Bank holiday date change warning for calendars

Promotional calendar companies could be caught out by a change of bank holidays next year to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day.

The government has only recently announced the movement of the early May bank holiday to mark the end of the Second World War. Companies that have already printed stock for 2020 may have to reprint or produce stickers to indicate the change.

Rose Calendars of Colchester, one of the biggest calendar companies in Britain, recently warned that the unexpected change could cost the business thousands of pounds. Speaking to local newspaper, the *Daily Gazette*, boss, Michael Rose said that with the company printing more than two million promotional calendars a year, it has been selling the 2020 version since January and the first products ship in July.

"It means we have had to spring into action to ensure our customers get the right date in their 2020 calendars so we are producing special commemorative stickers to highlight the occasion," he

told the paper. "As a reminder of the date, customers will be able to use a selection of the stickers, not only on their calendars, but on other promotional materials."

Blair Carroll, managing director of BPMA member Boosters, said the date change presented a particular problem to the manufacturers who overprint clients' details on stock calendar sheets which may well have already been in preparation for this year's calendar season.

"As all our calendars and year planners are printed to order regardless of the quantity required we can respond to changes like this instantly. The only additional work for us has been to amend the date of the holiday on our templates."

Carroll urged clients to ask their suppliers how they would be dealing with the date change, which sees the holiday move from Monday, May 4 to Friday, May 8. "Our advantage is that we can highlight specific dates with clients events and colour match the whole calendar to clients' corporate colours," he said.

Listawood heads for Hill

Former managing director of Senator Pens, Andrew Hill, has joined promotional products manufacturer, Listawood in the newly created role of group sales and marketing director.

Hill, who joined Senator nearly 20 years ago, announced the move saying that he was leaving the Harlow-based pen company in the summer to pursue new challenges with Listawood, which is located in Kings Lynn.

Listawood managing director, Alex Turner said: "I'm extremely pleased that Andrew's joined the team. He's one of the most capable leaders in our industry and I'm certain he'll be instrumental in delivering our substantial growth plans going forward."

Senator group CEO, Daniel Jeschonowski said that Hill's influence was fundamental to the success of the UK operation of Europe's leading manufacturer of personalised promotional writing instruments. His supportive and progressive philosophy had been continually rewarded, he added, with Senator UK winning over 60 industry awards for service excellence and an above-average length of service for UK staff.

Hill is to be succeeded as managing director of Senator by Shane Davies, who brings with him a wealth of operational and leadership experience from 17 years in the Metropolitan Police, with more recent posts in senior management at National Express. Following the recruitment process, Jeschonowski said he was positive about the appointment: "We feel that Shane encompasses the full package of what we are looking for in this role – he is experienced, determined and focused."

See Andrew Hill interview on p9.





New online marketing tools for distributors

The Pen Warehouse (TPW), has launched an online marketing platform called Business Solutions, aimed at driving distributor sales growth, digitally.

Since 2013, TPW has been credited with the introduction of several digital marketing firsts, including web-to-print technology with the award-winning platform No-Minimum.co.uk and most recently personalised customer logo digital catalogues.

Business Solutions was developed in-house and in consultation with customers. The integrated marketing services platform combines digital marketing and branding services in one user-friendly portal, providing a one-stop-shop to distributors.

Registered distributors have access to a choice of promotional files and collateral across six dedicated channels, to help them develop creative campaigns that generate interest, demand and new business. These are: Marketing Hub; Custom Catalogues;

Digital Catalogues; Promotional TV; Branded Samples, and Branding Services.

The Marketing Hub online portal has everything distributors need to develop and run promotional marketing campaigns. It features digital marketing packs containing ready-to-use digital artwork files for the most popular and latest products as well as compliance documents. Artwork can be personalised and embedded into existing campaigns. The Pen Warehouse can also offer an in-house creative design team to support distributors.

Operations Director, Helen Dyl, said: "We are committed to investing in digital excellence to provide our customers with enhanced competitive advantage. Business Solutions represents the next stage of our expansion, providing our customers with the latest marketing technology to maximise their product promotion and increase their sales growth."

Nottingham show features recyclable products

Pinfold Promotions hosted an end user event in Nottingham, with 14 key suppliers showcasing their latest promotional merchandise.

Just under 100 end user visitors spent the day speaking to industry experts about their merchandise requirements, with recyclable and eco products featuring prominently.

Dean Collins from Strive Badge, and Phil Roberts from Fanela said it was one of the busiest shows they had attended. "It was a really well organised show, with lots of excellent conversations had throughout the day," said Roberts.

Visitor feedback was very positive, with clients expressing their thanks to Pinfold Promotions for bringing such high quality merchandise to Nottingham.

Kerry Adcock, managing director, Pinfold Promotions, said: "The show was brilliant. Our suppliers worked really hard all day, with clients literally queuing to speak to them and on the back of the show we have already taken several high value orders. I would definitely host another."



Best sellers receive mellow makeover

The Pen Warehouse, has also given two of its best-selling ballpen ranges a mellow makeover to produce a collection of appealing new pastel colours.

New for this year, the Contour Pastel Ballpen has a popular curved shape with chrome trim and a plastic grip that matches the barrel colour. A large 60mm x 8mm maximum print area for spot colour designs provides a wealth of branding opportunity. The Contour Pastel Ballpen is printed on a five-day lead-time, with a three-day express service also available.

For even better value for money, the Supersaver Pastel Ballpen joins the cost-friendly range, offering a smooth, uncluttered design. It is available with a generous 45mm x 20mm print area. Orders are also turned around in five days, with

a three-day express service available.

The new pastel edition ballpens are available in a choice of six on-trend pastel colours, including beatific blue, graceful green and placid purple.



Seed wristbands ticketing cut waste

Sow Easy has introduced a new product to help cut down on paper waste at events.

The company's seeded wristbands are suitable for festivals, sporting events and more. More convenient than a loose ticket, the band can be planted after the event to provide a green memory of the occasion.

Sow Easy products encourage flower and herb planting and help to deter consumers from plastic-based promotional products. The company has extended its own green credentials by implementing solar panels as a means of powering its UK-based factory.

Staff also navigate the web on Ecosia, also known as, 'the search engine that plants trees'. Ecosia uses its profits to plant throughout Africa and South America benefiting the local economy and the environment.

Hatters expands into new workspace

North West promotional merchandise company Hatters has committed to expansion plans for 2019 with the acquisition of new workspace in Stockport town centre.

Set up in 1994 by managing director Jo Shippen, Hatters has grown over its 25-year history, accumulating national and blue-chip brand clients.

In order to accommodate its growing workforce and take on additional projects to meet the company goals, 1,500 sq ft of office space has been acquired in addition to 3,500 sq ft of warehousing space for product fulfilment services.

Specialising in promotional merchandise, print management and

product fulfilment – including ordering of stock, storage and delivery – the company prides itself on providing a personal service to customers. This has been recognised in numerous awards including a bronze in Totally Stockport's Customer Service Awards.

"I'm delighted that the relocation into brand new, self-contained premises and expansion of workspace has coincided with the 25th anniversary of Hatters," said Jo Shippen, managing director, Hatters. "The new office and warehousing space provide us with so many opportunities for future growth and I'm optimistic that we'll be celebrating many more company milestones in years to come."

CEG hands Corkill agent role

Corporate Executive Gifts (CEG) has appointed Neil Corkill to represent it as multi supplier agent. Corkill has more than 25 years in the industry and has developed close working relationships with distributors during this period.

Richard Curtis, managing director, CEG said: "We are delighted with this external sales appointment and the potential it brings. These are exciting times for us as we have recently rebranded as CEG Collection, launched a brand new trade and an end user website as well as introducing over 20 new product lines."

Corkill is primarily based in the South East with visits to distributors up to the Midlands. As well as CEG, he also represents United Brands, Chilli Concept and 14Promotions.



Essential hat trick at business awards

Clothing company Essential has triumphed in three categories at the SME Luton and Bedfordshire Business Awards.

The family-run supplier scooped the titles of Dunstable Business of the Year, Business of the Year: Over 50 Employees and Overall Business of the Year 2019 for the county.

Essential will now go on to compete at the SME National Business Awards at Wembley Stadium on 6 December 2019, representing Luton and Bedfordshire in Business of the Year (More than 50 employees).

Judges praised Essential for superb company results and re-investment into the business. "The growth over the years has been astonishing. You can see they really care about the clients they work with and the local community," judges added.

George Georgiou, Essential managing director, said: "It is an honour to be recognised at the SME Luton and

Bedfordshire Business Awards and we thank all our clients who have supported us over the years."

Louis Georgiou, Essential marketing manager, added, "Essential is a family business, it all started with our dad and a single embroidery machine in 1998, so to be where we are today is really big."

Essential has supplied corporate clothing for the past 20 years, producing fully finished apparel and promotional wear, decorated with embroidery, screen printing, direct-to-garment, transfers, sublimation, laser engraving and embossing.

The company recently launched a new division focusing on the workwear and personal protective equipment (PPE) markets. Essential Workwear offers full custom branded workwear, uniform, and PPE solutions and represents a major area of growth for the company.

Goldstar appoints European manager

Olivier Chabal has been promoted to become Goldstar's European strategic sales manager as the company progresses its plans to develop its business across the continent still further.

Chabal takes up this new role after more than five successful years as Goldstar's country manager for France.

Colin Loughran, general manager, Goldstar said: "Demand for our products is increasing significantly across Europe and there is enormous potential for further growth. Olivier's vast experience in this industry and proven record of achievement make him the ideal person to drive our business forward in this important new role."





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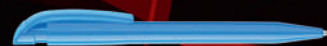
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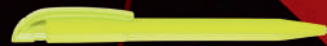
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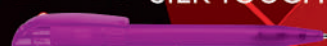
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IN THE HOT SEAT

ANDREW HILL,
LISTAWOOD

Q. How did you get into the merchandise industry?

A. While working in advertising I was put in touch with a very well established sourcing house based in central London. At the time, I knew very little about premiums other than the obvious things such as 'widgets' in cornflake packets, voucher redemption campaigns, and the odd footie coin collection. However, I quickly saw the attractiveness of enhancing a brand's profile, and incremental business, by adding value through product.

The company was looking for someone to direct things on the sales side and felt I fitted the bill. I accepted the position and it wasn't long before I was totally hooked on the sheer range of possibilities and the excitement of matching bespoke products to target audiences. That's when the world of promotional products really opened up to me and boy, did I have fun, working in the UK, Europe, and, of course, China.

Q. What were product standards like at that time?

A. Certainly variable. As with today, discussions on budget and perceived value were to the fore and it was important that clients and their agencies were fully aware of what they were getting. Sometimes operating 'below the line' meant that there wasn't the initial intensity at the client end with some of the campaigns we converted back then, but the surrounding furore around 'must have' premiums certainly changed hearts and minds.

The market for product was in the throes of development and, as today, we needed to ensure that quality was maintained otherwise the fallout could affect brand

equity. Good quality control procedures were essential, as was an agreement on product life expectancy, thus investment in those areas was critical. Without this internal pressure, it could have been a nightmare as promotional products, generally, were perceived to only last five minutes and, for many even that would have been an exaggeration.

Q. Why is the push for greater compliance a good thing?

A. The industry has come to a crossroads. We either have to accept that compliance will help to enhance and grow our industry, raising the profile of products and our expertise, or we somewhat covertly trade within a lowly perceived industry and take the consequences.

Those companies who have not yet switched on to the benefits of product compliance will find it harder to convert business and maintain an acceptable margin. Fortunately, we are seeing increased levels of internal investment across the board from both suppliers and distributors who are in it for the long haul. Good provenance is an important part of a business development strategy.

Q. Why is it to the benefit of BPMA members?


A. It is in all members' hands to exploit these opportunities by delivering on 'quality as standard'. This can be achieved through the alignment of BPMA membership, a pre-defined quality position with their customers, and, of course, quality agreements through the channels. These processes can be created by all, irrespective of the size of the business.

Q. Where will the compliance debate go next?

A. Quality/compliance is here to stay. Those who choose to ignore it will eventually have nowhere to go. The next stage will be two-pronged. Firstly, should we focus on engaging those who do not understand why it is important to their future and help them come on board. As consumers we are all aware of quality distinctions but, arguably, less so of compliance and environmental impact yet. So, secondly, should we now raise the question as to whether the industry should set its own minimum standards? Is this a step too far or is it long overdue?

Q. How can BPMA members get involved?

A. The BPMA is currently taking advice and opinions from its Charter members on a number of subjects and this one clearly has a defining context. All BPMA members operate within its Code of Conduct and are entitled to discuss the direction in which they would like the association to advance. We are all stakeholders and we are all entitled to our say, and whether it be through a BPMA organised event, discussion forum, or by email to the BPMA executive, I would recommend that you have your say.

Andrew Hill is group sales & marketing director, Listawood 



ASK CLIVE

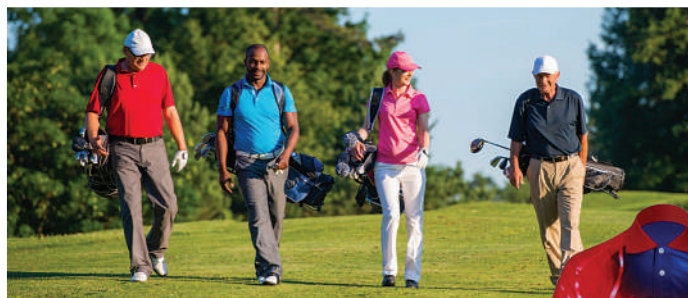
Make the most of golf day opportunities, says **Clive Allcott**



With the annual BPMA golf tournament taking place last month (see report on p19), I thought it would be in keeping to highlight opportunities that golf clothing and accessories offer in the promotional world.

Many of your clients will be hosting their own golf day in the coming months and will be looking for an array of products to sponsor and support the event. Their choices of merchandise are usually driven by quality, multiple branding opportunities and that they are fit for purpose.

On the clothing side you can offer some of the latest golf clothing so that your customer's customer can perform at their



very best on the course that day, or wear it on future golfing days out, offering extra impacts and impressions. There are many options from the golf polo, golf cap, golf socks even golf trousers so you really can kit someone out



from head to toe.

All of these clothing options do not necessarily have to come off the shelf. You can also offer bespoke dye sublimated polo shirts or creatively designed headwear that really will 'wow' your client with their own designs.

For the dedicated golfers there are even waterproofs, wind proofs and base layer clothing so that you can



tackle a round of golf no matter what the weather is.

Most garment decorators can supply traditional golf garments as well as performance focused and technological, advanced golf wear along with the right branding to suit the garment.

There is no point in supplying waterproof wear and then putting 20,000 holes in it with an embroidery.

Outside of the clothing arena there are other opportunities to supply golf-related items such as golf towels, shoe bags, golf holdalls and suit carriers all of which will stand out with quality branding. This accompanied with the more traditional branded golf ball, umbrella and tee will make sure that your client has a golf day to remember.

Happy selling
Clive, The Clothing Guru



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ENCORE SHOWS GROWTH

Stately Woburn was the venue for the catalogue group's annual event, and the BPMA came too

The Encore Catalogue Group met in late May for its annual catalogue launch, exhibition and awards event.

The venue, Woburn Abbey Sculpture Gallery, hosted 45 of the more than 70 Encore suppliers and on a sunny, spring day a majority of the distributor members gathered for an excellent event.

Some of the members took the opportunity of visiting nearby Bletchley Park as well as the Safari Park and the Abbey and Gardens.

Diane Jaggard, sales director of Encore, said: "We couldn't have wished for a better day, for the weather, beautiful surroundings and the support of our supplier and distributor members. The group continues to grow in numbers and quality, and we are

delighted to see most of our new suppliers and distributors here today."


Jaggard also presented the group awards before the afternoon exhibition. The winners for the 2018/19 catalogue were:

- **Supplier of the Year** – Senator Pens
- **Runner up** – Bizz Badge
- **Third place** – Crystal Galleries

- **Distributor of the Year** – Ross Promotional

- **Runner up** – Naomi Scott – Reflex Marketing & Promotions

- **Third** – Formkraft.

The BPMA was in attendance in the shape of CEO Jon Birrell and newly appointed marketing and events manager, Daniel Symonds. 



What they said

"Such a beautiful venue and we were blessed again with some truly gorgeous weather. I thought the turnout of distributors was really good and this speaks volumes about the growing success of the group."

Rachel Ross, Goldstar

"Thank you so much for organising today's event at a brilliant venue. It was great to see my suppliers and even had a chat with Des from Suffolk, a distributor. Absolutely brilliant. What a lovely venue, great food and 10/10 all round."

Julie Mole – Blue Mole Promotional

"A stunning venue, incredible weather, a good social gathering, wonderful food and company and a well-attended and busy show. What more could you ask for?"

Ashley Abrahamson, AZX Sport & AA Bags

"It was an excellent day at a fantastic venue! The table-top show was a real success and we were kept busy throughout the event with many of your new members eager to learn about our products. Looking forward to next year."

Steve Gadd, Premier Brands

"Fantastic location and a great turnout. It was good to be able to see familiar faces and to meet so many of the new distributors that have joined the group. Well worth the day out of the office."

Simon Bakewell, Booth Brothers

"Rachael and I very much enjoyed the event last week. Superb venue and really great to have some one-to-ones with key suppliers. Very useful."

Simon Hodgetts, SB Print

A-Z
YOU WEAR IT WELL

Promotional clothing remains one of the most popular picks by brands. From staff uniforms to team events and consumer prizes, it has many needs covered. Find out more with our A-Z of clothing

A ALL PURPOSE
Clothing is a universal language to any audience. From T-shirts, polos, hoodies to hats, all can be branded, including

Clothing is a universal need so it's merchandise that can be tailored to any audience and any campaign. Don't just think of the classics – T-shirts, polos, hoodies – as there are plenty of other options that can be branded, including accessories. Brands can put their mark on anything from bandanas and socks, to gloves and sneakers.



Brand awareness

Increased brand exposure is easily achieved with branded clothing. The daily commute transforms staff into walking advertisements for a business. Whereas other merchandise tends to be situated in one place such as on a desk or in a car, clothing is out and proud. A logo becomes more memorable as people start to associate features of a uniform such as colour or style with a particular brand.



CREATIVITY

As well as sourcing a wide range of clothing products, promotional clothing suppliers can also offer creative support, often included as part of the service when you place an order. Take advantage of this to ensure that your clothing product really does stand out from the crowd. A supplier can offer creative advice on everything from choice of garment and decorative approach, to size and placement of the logo.

E Exhibitions

Having your staff kitted out in a co-ordinated look sends out a message that you are a serious when attending high profile exhibitions. Colourful uniforms attract the eye of visitors and let them know who to speak to at any event. Clothing can also be involved as giveaways to provide a reminder of your brand afterwards.

DECORATION

There are many different decorative options that can be considered, all of which have their own strengths and implications for cost. A reputable supplier can walk you through techniques such as embroidery, applique, screen printing and embossing, explaining their various applications and advising on the best option for your campaign.

Fair trade

applique, screen
 pressing, explaining
 applications and
 the best option for
 the campaign.

Clothing can
 be produced
 thousands of
 miles away from
 its eventual end user,
 but the ultimate customer is
 increasingly concerned about how
 it was produced. No brand wants to be
 on the end of an exploitation story. Ethical and
 sustainable clothing means different things to
 different people, but at its heart, it's about ensuring
 that people in your supply chain are treated fairly
 and the environmental impact is minimised. It's
 worth finding out about clients' expectations.

GOLF DAYS
As the BPMA's
recent

As the BPMA's recent Golf Day (see page 19) demonstrated, plenty of business still gets done on the fairways. It's a fun way of spending valuable time with clients, suppliers or staff, and the right kit can bring it all together.

J JACKETS

While many buyers opt for clothing items at the lower end of



the clothing spectrum, investing in apparel with a higher perceived value can pay dividends. Jackets are a case in point. They may cost slightly more, but are more likely to become a prized possession of the recipient, whether it's a sports jacket, outdoor raincoat, or a snuggly fleece.

H

Hats

If you want to get ahead, get a hat. Styles have changed since the Hat Council used that phrase to encourage us to don bowlers, fedoras or trilbys. These days, we're more likely to grab a baseball cap, beanie, or flat cap. Brands should take note though that hats continue to provide the perfect eye level moving advertising.



I Industry standards

Does your supplier adhere to industry service standards and audits? In today's world, it's becoming increasingly important to work within an 'ethical' supply chain. Knowing your suppliers are maintaining employee standards and best practice brings with it many benefits. For a start, you will be part of a sustainable supply chain; one that won't suddenly implode because of a weak link.

Kids wear

Why should adults have all the fun? Some promotional clothing suppliers can provide items designed for youngsters too. Products such as leavers hoodies and branded hi-visibility vests are just two that have become more popular in recent years.

K

L

LEAD TIMES

With so many overseas options, you may think that you'll get a better price by placing your order with an overseas supplier. However, lead times will inevitably be longer. Hold ups with customs or lost shipments are not unusual. A UK supplier is likely to have items in stock, there won't be any language barriers or time zones to negotiate and their proximity means you can visit.

M Money

Financial stability is important, so it's definitely worth taking time to do a quick background check on any supplier you are considering working with. It doesn't take long to do a quick internet search for any reviews that the supplier may not be keen to share on their own website. You can also run a credit check fairly inexpensively – it's better to be safe than sorry, and certainly cheaper than finding out the hard way that a business can't fulfil your order.

Outdoors

Plenty of businesses look to get their people out of stuffy offices and meetings rooms to set their minds free in the great outdoors. With the right clothing, it needn't be a chore. Look to warm and waterproof options to keep your people in top gear.



National pride

With the Women's Football World Cup, the Rugby World Cup, and the Cricket World Cup all running this summer, there are plenty of opportunities to back our girls and boys. Event merchandising has become big business around sporting tournaments with fans snapping up official replica gear as well as less formal styles to show their support.

N

Quality

This is the number one factor that buyers consider when looking at promotional clothing according to research by the BPMA. It came out ahead of price and style, which goes to show that you don't always need to opt for the lowest common denominator.

R Reputation

A great place to start your search for a new supplier is good old-fashioned recommendation. If others are getting a great service from a supplier, the chances are they pride themselves on customer satisfaction, which is a big tick in the first box on your checklist. Failing personal recommendation, check the suppliers website for testimonials, or ask them to send you some directly or put you in touch with existing customers so you can hear it from the horse's mouth.

P Professional image

Brands spend millions creating the right image with advertising and design, so why not continue that message right through to the point of interaction with customers? A consistent look across the workforce is smart and distinctive. You only get one chance to make a first impression and a smart, corporate appearance goes a long way in making this a positive experience.

Safety

Ensuring that staff are appropriately dressed for their job role is made easier when the clothing is provided to them. Whether it's flame resistant, hi-visibility or waterproof features that you require, the branded clothing industry is varied enough to supply all of your needs.

S

Clothing

T T-SHIRTS

The humble T remains the most popular piece of branded clothing, used by 76% of companies according to BPMA research. Its timeless appeal and simplicity belies its flexibility as a merchandise choice. Although they may seem to be fairly uniform, T-shirts are available in a range of styles, colours, cuts, and decorative options. And you can never have too many.

V Videos

Bemused by the clothing decoration options open to you? Don't be. The BPMA has created a series of videos showing common branding techniques. There are many choices available, but these cover the most popular such as embroidery, screen print, direct to garment and transfer printing. bpmaclothing.co.uk/branding

U

UNIQUE LOOK

Creating a style that is unique to your brand is possible thanks to the wide choice of garments, fabrics and colours that are available. Interest in your business will soon spread, once your eye-catching clothing is seen out and about.

W Workwear

Employees will appreciate the ease of wearing branded clothing as they'll no longer have to spend their mornings deciding on an outfit to wear to work. Additionally, employer-supplied clothing offers a cost saving to employees who would otherwise have to purchase their own working wardrobe.

THE X FACTOR

The garments you decide on will bring your corporate culture and values to life. Premium shirts might suggest a professional environment while T-Shirts are perhaps better suited to organisations with a more informal approach to business. Choose wisely to ensure you are giving out the right message.

Your look

Personalisation takes promotional clothing to the ultimate level of individuality. Football players have their names across the yoke of their shirts, and so can you. It might not be everybody's cup of tea, but you can add names to clothing to make it really personal.

Z Zap!

Laser etching might sound hi-tech but it's here now. This next generation tone-on-tone decoration technique uses a high energy beam of light to burn the top layer of the fabric to produce an etched contrast. As only the upper most portion of the fabric is etched, the structural integrity of the fabric is not compromised.

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*based on the Festival of Marketing 2018

A woman with a short haircut and a man with a large afro are wearing polo shirts. The woman is in the foreground wearing a grey polo shirt with white trim on the collar and sleeves. The man is behind her wearing a white polo shirt with dark blue trim on the collar and sleeves. They are both looking towards the camera against a light grey background.

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Jon Birrell - CEO BPMA



SWING WHEN YOU'RE WINNING

BPMA golfers hit off for the second BPMA Golf Day recently

The second annual BPMA Golf Day saw a great day of golf in the sunny Berkshire countryside. This year's event was enjoyed by both distributors and suppliers.

Held at the stunning Burnham Beches Golf Club, more than 20 golfers battled it out for the coveted trophies supplied by Crystal Galleries and Laser Crystal. The golfing day was a mix of networking, laughter, friendship and golfing ability culminating in many of the Tomlinson Golf supplied balls, now resting in the trees and heavy rough of the course.


It was a delight to see Team Premier Impressions take home the winners' trophies for the morning scramble, however looking at their afternoon scores



it took more out of them than they were expecting.

The afternoon was a very close affair where the newly-formed team for the day 'Promo Warriors' came out on top winning on countback. The prestigious individual prize for the best score of the afternoon went to Matt (Tiger) Pluckrose of Desktop Ideas with a score of 40 points playing off a 9 handicap. Quality golf!

BPMA CEO, Jon Birrell was on hand to present the winning players with their handsome trophies.

Make a date in your diary for next year's Golf Day. It's on Wednesday 17th June 2020. 

2019 BPMA Golf Day results

Morning Team Scramble Winners

- **Premier Impressions** – Alan Stride, Mark Miles, Alan Pockney, Neil Butler.
- **Runners up** – Desktop Ideas – Matt Pluckrose (Desktop ideas), Chris Doherty (Dowlis), David Tysall (Geiger BTC), Nic Taylor (Dowlis).

Afternoon Fourball better ball

- **Winners** – Promo Warriors – The Carole Group (Ceri Jones), Promotrade (Geoff Skiller), Dan Rogers (The Outdoors Company), Tim Moore (guest).
- **Nearest the pin 3rd hole** – Matt Pluckrose (Desktop Ideas)
- **Nearest the pin 6th hole** – Andrew Langley (Juniper)
- **Nearest the pin 10th hole** – Chris Keel (Firebrand)
- **Nearest the pin 13th hole** – Sion Jones (Desktop Ideas)

Individual Stableford

- **Winner** – Matt Pluckrose (Desktop Ideas)
- **Runner Up** – Dan Rogers (The Outdoors Company)

CONTACT **NOT** COMMODITY

Where do merchandising businesses need to focus their marketing efforts? Watertight Marketing founder, **Bryony Thomas**, outlines what BPMA members' experiences reveal

Almost all conversations I have about marketing, particularly with sales-focussed businesses, starts with them telling me that what they need from their marketing efforts is more high quality leads. In the Watertight Marketing language, this equates to turning the 'taps' on.

However, when we look more deeply at the marketing activities that businesses have in place, we find fewer than 20% who actually need to focus here. In our research with merchandising businesses earlier this year, we found this to be even more pronounced, with fewer than 15% needing to focus on the taps part of the process.

Fixing the hole

This is because, 64% of those who took part in our study told us that they effectively have a hole in their bucket. And, 22% told us that it was converting leads, not generating them, that really slowed their sales success. When the leads you generate don't convert, and the customers you win don't come back, it stands to reason that spending yet more money on the front end of marketing – awareness and lead generation – becomes exhausting and expensive.

From those in the room with me at the January Education Day, and those who subsequently undertook their online diagnostic with us, the top marketing focus for merchandising businesses was the opposite of lead generation. Using our Touchpoint Leak framework, what came out top for 45% of respondents was the need to find appropriate and effective ways of staying in touch with existing customers.

Contact strategies

When we looked at this in detail in the workshop, we found that there was a prevalent default to sending previous customers special offers and discount deals – effectively using price promotions as a reason to get back in touch. In effect, this continually pulls the conversation back to cost competition, and further exacerbates the commoditisation of merchandise.

Even where deals aren't offered, workshop delegates found it hard to come up with ideas for getting in touch

with customers that wasn't inherently sales-focussed, rather than customer focussed. If we see this behaviour as analogous to friends who only ever get in touch when they want something from you, it's easy to see how always asking for a sale (albeit with a discount) undermines a meaningful relationship.

In the Watertight Marketing methodology, this is addressed by focussing on forgotten customers. We talk about the Three S Customer Communications model:

- **Service:** How can you get in touch in a way that serves your customer in a genuinely helpful way? A great example here would be some sort of useful calendar or planner relevant to the lives of your buyers.

- **Special:** How can you shine a light on the successes of your customers? Some people do this brilliantly with their own Awards, or by showcasing things their clients are up to. By far the simplest is to get busy with greetings cards, marking special dates and milestones.

- **Social:** How can you facilitate social interactions? Some might do this with online groups; others might sponsor the bar at a trade show. However you do it, social glue supports any relationship.

With the Three S model taking up a good 60-80% of your customer communication, the remaining S for Sales should be much more warmly received, and much less reliant on a cost-cutting deal.

When operating in a highly competitive, and cost-focussed, market, the need to differentiate with intelligent and insightful marketing is more important than ever. Our mantra is that you need to out-think, rather than out-spend, your competition.

Bryony Thomas is the creator of the Watertight Marketing methodology, captured in her best-selling book of the same name. Through fully-guided engagements, a network of licensed practitioners, and self-serve online courses and resources, Watertight Marketing gives you access to thinking tools and frameworks designed and refined over the last decade, and tested across more than 2,000 organisations. watertightmarketing.com





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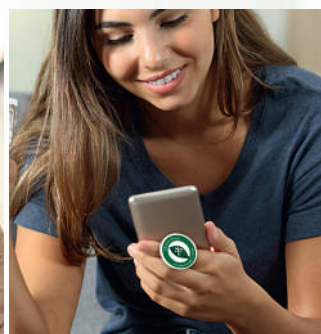
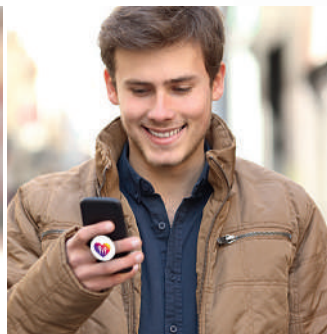
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BUYERS ARE BACKING BRITISH MADE

Exclusive research by the Briman group proves that the message about the benefits of buying British are getting through, says **Mark Alderson**

Just before Easter, the Briman group commissioned a research project to help determine the buying trends of distributors in relation to buying British made products. An impressive 94% of survey participants recognised benefits in buying products made in the UK. Of great interest was the fact that 45% of these had specifically been asked to source British manufactured products.

In spite of the many practical benefits and efficiencies of buying British advocated by Briman members, the most valued benefit amongst the survey contributors

proved to be that of supporting the UK economy. In current uncertain times, the benefits of a healthy home economy on employment rates and linked spending power of British workers and therefore associated demand for promotional products, resonates through the supply chain of British manufacturers, distributors and end users.

Many respondents greatly valued the advantage of the significantly faster lead times achieved through buying British manufactured goods, in enabling them to offer customers the best possible service

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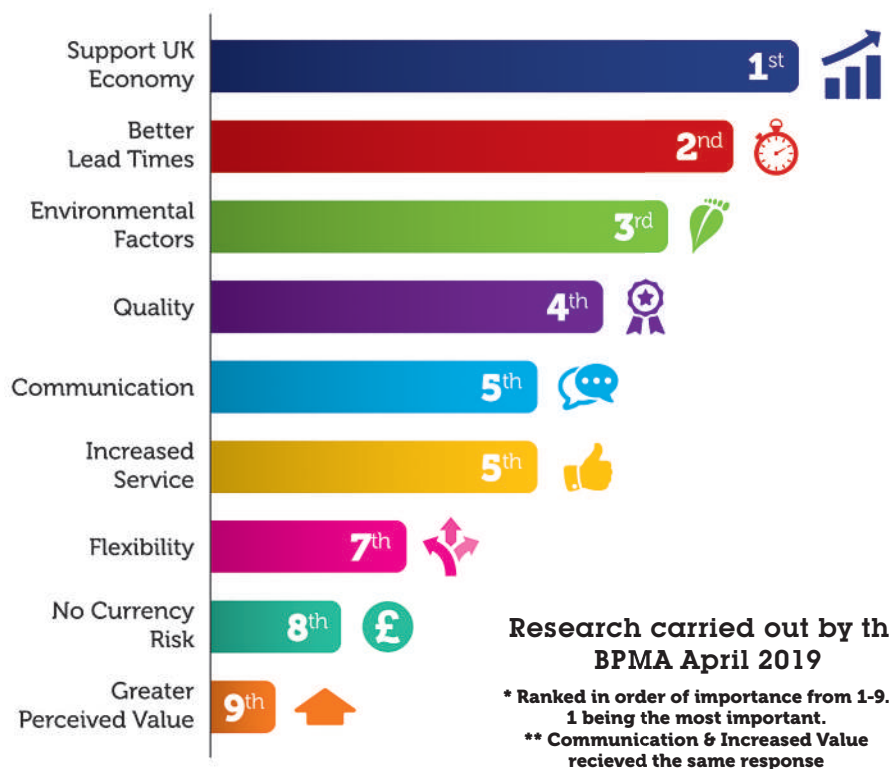
and greater opportunities for re-ordering the high quality products with which the British producers are associated. Offering and receiving good service continues to be of paramount importance to distributors. The benefits of strong communication and supply chain accountability, together with greater flexibility within the British industry are also strongly appreciated.

It is also clear from the survey results that distributors set great store by the environmental benefits gained from buying British. All Briman member companies aim to provide eco-friendly, energy efficient and sustainable manufacturing facilities where recycling is high on their agenda. Without the haulage headaches of long distance imports, UK manufactured products offer lower carbon footprints and ensure supply chains have fewer negative effects on the environment. Considerable cost benefits come alongside the environmental ones as the uncertainties of import delays, fluctuating exchange rates and potential communication difficulties can be avoided.

Given, the strength of support for British made promotional products by distributors, the Briman group has commissioned a further research project to investigate if these values and trends are mirrored by end users. We look forward to sharing these with you in due course.

Mark Alderson is chairman of the Briman Group. 

Which of the perceived benefits of Buying British are most important to you?



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STRESS TESTS

Money worries can drag a business and its principals down. Don't get caught out, warns **Mike Collins**



When Prince William, the future King, champions a cause, people usually sit up and take notice.

One topic the Prince is bringing to the fore is mental health. With the month of May recently focusing on wellbeing in the workplace and including the headline grabbing Mental Health Week, Direct Route/Account Assyst felt it timely to highlight the steps you can take to aid in reducing financial concerns and worries.

Financial wellbeing

There is a widely accepted link between financial wellbeing and mental wellbeing and although it is the consumer element of debt that usually makes the news, there is a very real necessity and importance to address the requirement to have commercial financial wellbeing on an even keel also.

Financial gain may not be everybody's motivator, but it is certainly an enabler. Every business owner knows that when their business is doing well, they can afford to pay the correct wages, which in turns attracts the best talent, maximises productivity and results and boosts everybody's wellbeing.

The simplest way of summarising how to achieve commercial financial wellbeing is simply to ensure that your incomings at very least match but ideally are above, your outgoings.

Process perfection

We at Direct Route/Account Assyst champion the mantra that "perfect processes mean perfection in the workplace".

Regular readers will know that we encourage everybody to factor at least one or two polished and workable processes and systems into their day to day credit control process.

Good credit control is measured by having a successful, robust process in place that can be applied to each and every matter, irrespective of size, age or customer. The ability to keep systems uniform, exact and regular removes the stress and anxiety of reaction and then action.

Stick to the plan

The ability to have a plan in place and stick to it, allows business owners to be confident in their ability to recover their monies and in doing so, move on to other more pressing matters while all the while maximising the payments into their bank.

Quite simply, it is these basic rules that spawned the very existence of both AccountAssyst and Direct Route and they are one reason why we are still proving a success for others today, a quarter of a century later.

In AccountAssyst, there is the simplest pre-legal process to creating new credit accounts, monitoring them and maximising the chances of payment of invoices. The ability to have a recognised, successful and proven credit management process that can be used repeatedly, is key to reducing exposure and risk when raising invoices with credit.

With Direct Route, you have a debt recovery process that not only offers zero cost debt recovery, but on many occasions, can also include legal and enforcement fees paid.

Having the ability to offload the stress and worry of late payers, not only alleviates stress and worry but also frees up key time for businesses to spend on the more productive and profitable aspects of their business.

Finance may not be every person's motivation but cash is both the key and the lifeblood to every business. Without sufficient money and cash flow then every business will inevitably fail. Simply apply just some of these steps and take action to ensure that your business finances don't become an issue.

Mike Collins is managing director, Account Assyst



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LESSONS FROM STEVE JOBS

Melissa Chevin explains why the Apple founder was a great marketing teacher



Of all the inspirational business people from the last 50 years, perhaps no-one has made a bigger impact than Apple founder, the late Steve Jobs. His career is one I followed closely over the years, and I rarely failed to find something worthy of emulating.

Jobs led probably the greatest turnaround in corporate history – taking a company on the brink of bankruptcy and transforming it into one of the most iconic and profitable brands in the world.

Above all, the secret of his success was marketing. Here are just a few things he taught us.

Make a great product

Everyone who has ever owned an Apple product will be familiar with the incredible customer experience. Even the packaging is a work of art. All that would be nothing without the product itself, but Jobs also knew that customer expectations were themselves only part of the picture.

He said: "It's not about pop culture and it's not about fooling people, and it's not about convincing people that they want something they don't."

"We figure out what we want. And I think we're pretty good at having the right discipline to think through whether a lot of other people

are going to want it too."

Turn consumers into evangelists

One of the key reasons behind Apple's phenomenal growth has been their ability to get their consumers to effectively endorse the brand. 'Apple fan boy' is commonly used to describe the people who use the products and who are passionate advocates for the brand.

Think of the huge queues outside Apple stores whenever there's a new iPhone launched – even if it's just an incremental upgrade. When was the last time you saw that for Samsung or Google?

And here's the thing. They're not just there for the phone. They're there because they want to support the brand. Their team. It's almost like football in that respect. No brand has inspired such deep and abiding loyalty as Apple has managed over the years.

Stay tuned for the next instalment of this column, when once again we will be picking some ripe Apple lessons from the tree of business knowledge.

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



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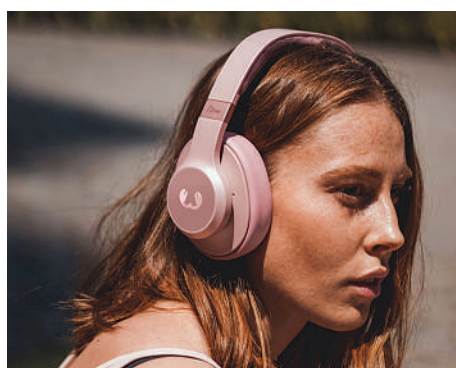
ACTIVE AGENT

Noise cancelling headphones are the latest tech product to cut through, says **Matt Pluckrose**



Whether your client's are commuting, travelling for holidays or even looking for peace in the office, active/noise cancelling (ANC) headphones are the hot promotional tech product this summer.

ANC headphones will suppress outside noise, preventing your music, podcasts and audiobooks from being ruined by



the outside world and enabling you to listen at lower volumes, preserving your hearing and maximising your tranquillity.

The best noise cancelling headphones don't just passively block sound by providing a physical barrier. They use tech to add an additional level of active noise cancelling that's especially invaluable on planes, trains and city streets – anywhere with constant noise at lower ranges. When it comes to noisy environments, ANC offers a much better overall experience than standard headphones.

Retail brands can easily cost hundreds of pounds but lower cost promotional pairs start at about £30. Simply add a logo to the product or packaging and you have a promotional product that will not be ignored and will be used constantly.

It's not long ago that noise cancelling headphones were all wired, large, and heavy with big batteries, bulky carry cases and lacked style. Increasingly they

are Bluetooth rather than wired and the batteries have shrunk, while battery life has got much longer. Carry cases are still popular which is great for branding rather than branding the product, making them more subtle for the wearer.

There is mixed opinion on the quality of sound especially when it's very quiet. Some people say they don't sound as good as standard but they do come into their own where there is background noise. Because of the way they're engineered, they also generally sound less good with the ANC turned off, which is a battery-saving measure.

That said, the most recent candidates are a big improvement over what was around a few years back. This is definitely an area to watch and as a super-premium gift, it really cuts through.

Matt Pluckrose is managing director of Desktop Ideas

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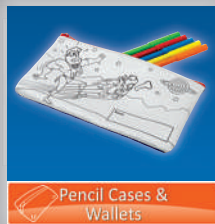
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MAKE YOURSELF INFORMED

In the first of a new column from a manufacturer perspective, **John Thorp** says it pays to ask the right questions



I was recently referred to as an industry veteran which I guess, having been in the market for more than 40 years can't be far from the truth.

In those early days there were no computers, the fax hadn't been invented let alone email, there were no mobile phones and artwork was sent by post. Three quarters of all business gifts were made in the UK, and no one delivered in less than four weeks.

The lack of sophisticated technology meant that people had to talk to each other and that their customers and suppliers had to understand one another's needs and problems. It could be argued that a person remembers a telephone conversation more than a hastily read email.

For all the instant messaging of today, it is imperative that suppliers and distributors communicate to help aid distributors in managing their customer's expectations.

There are great examples of this

throughout the industry and everyone's job is much easier if on standard product orders we know the lead time, the quantity and the budget. This information saves so much time and it focuses the

"It is vital to gain as much information about what the end user expects from a product"

end user. However, on occasion, we are still asked to quote on quantities from 25 up to 10,000. It's crazy.

I can remember many years ago I was

asked to quote for 250,000 sherry glasses which was a huge amount. I asked what they were for and was told they were to be given to visitors at a horse show. I checked the attendance for the previous year, which was less than 50,000 including children, and with this information, the client came back asking for 10,000.

Distributors talk up bespoke products to clients, with good reason. They are unique and are remembered more for it, and distributors should remember that bespoke products repeat far more frequently than standard products.

That being said, it is vital to gain as much information about what the end user expects from a product and the function that it is to perform as this can affect the construction of the product. Information is king.

John Thorp is owner of specialist manufacturer The Leather Business
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Liverpool keeps branding local with Wild Thang

Liverpool merchandise company, Wild Thang, provided a special embroidery job recently when it stitched Liverpool Football Club's first team kit for its winning Champions League Final in Madrid.

Andrew Derryhouse, Wild Thang MD said he was proud that the club had chosen the local company to brand the first team kit again

– Wild Thang also produced last year's embroidered final shirts.

"We are proud to have branded many premiership and elite teams' football shirts including Everton locally, but also across the UK with Man City, Wigan, Blackburn, Derby, West Ham, Leeds, Southampton and many more over the years," he said. "As this was for the Champions League Final, this job really

was the pinnacle of branding exposure."

The branding job also featured on the club's TV channel, LFC TV, with embroidery expert and department supervisor Nikki Boardman demonstrating the task. The film went viral with more than 300,000 views.

Wild Thang was also recently nominated for Best Customer Focused Business of the Year in the Liverpool Business Awards.



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GeigerBTC bulks up with Response Marketing acquisition

GeigerBTC is acquiring York-based distributor Response Marketing as part of its continued UK and European expansion strategy.

Response Marketing has been in

business since 1999. GeigerBTC, the UK subsidiary of US merchandise business, said it made the acquisition to support the needs of global customers in North America, Europe and worldwide.

David Tysall, managing director, Response Marketing, said: "We are really excited to become part of the Geiger family – it's a perfect marriage. Our expertise in marketing and innovation blends perfectly with Geiger's huge knowledge and global infrastructure."

Frank Murphy, managing director, GeigerBTC, said: "We are delighted to have David and his team on board. We feel very fortunate to have found such an experienced and creatively driven partner to work with. Their location in the beautiful city of York means that more of our clients can now enjoy an even better, local service going forward."

Murphy has indicated that GeigerBTC is still on the acquisition trail. The business is seeking out likely targets in the form of established distributor



businesses with a turnover of £1-2.5m.

The acquisition follows GeigerBTC's purchase of EMC Advertising in January. GeigerBTC was formed following the acquisition of BTC by the US company in 2018.

In its latest appointment, GeigerBTC has added Nicole Armstrong (above) as business development manager. She arrives with a wealth of experience within the marketing and advertising sector, and promotional merchandise industry.



Frank Murphy (left) shakes on the deal with Response Marketing's David Tysall

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ONWARDS & UPWARDS

With more than 500 learners having studied with the BPMA since 2013, the onus is on keeping learning fresh and relevant. **Daniela Arena** reviews the progress of the education programme

The BPMA education programme is growing from strength to strength with just over 100 learners currently studying. The demand for a structured industry specific training programme that can be integrated into each business is rising steadily.

Since its launch in March 2013 we have seen more than 500 learners enroll on the programme across the TPM, CPM and MPM levels. Learners are noticing how much they are taking in and applying to their day jobs pretty much from the get-go. It gives them the confidence to explain things on a more professional level with the customer. Education and training are firmly on everyone's agenda for 2019 with many companies incorporating the TPM course into staff inductions.

For those of you who don't know, the BPMA education programme is an online continuous professional development training tool with optional introductory seminars and factory visits. At the BPMA

we strongly believe that no matter how many years industry experience you may have, you can always learn more. It is a training programme that can enhance and support a company's existing training and development programme or can be used as a standalone training tool.


Online study

Regardless of which course you are working towards, each learner will be expected to study a series of mandatory content. The course then becomes tailored to each individual as you will be required to select content to suit you, your needs and your business. Most managers allow their staff to study at work, allocating one hour a week but many of our driven learners prefer to study in the evenings and weekend when there is less interruption.

Once registered, delegates will have access to a clear, current and easy to navigate online platform. Content is categorised

into TPM, CPM and MPM Mandatory and suggested content, and within each of the 14 subject categories. Videos have been created to be engaging and to give an alternative learning method. Under each category, there are related written downloadable documents for those that like to study in the more traditional manner. They will be encouraged to attend a free BPMA education programme introductory seminar for group tasks and industry specific training.

Add this learning practice to on the job training and the end results will speak for themselves. It helps produce knowledgeable, confident, industry-trained individual with an appetite to learn and develop further. Who doesn't want that sort of talent working for them?

Anyone interested in progressing their skills should visit education.bpma.co.uk and sign up. Demonstrations of the online platform can be provided. Contact Daniela Arena at the BPMA for details. Daniela@bpma.co.uk or 01372 371 182. 

CALLING FOR CONTENT – GET INVOLVED!

The BPMA is your trade association and one of the key strands of its mission is education.

As you are no doubt aware, it has in place a robust, well used and innovative education programme that has been written for the industry by the industry.

The BPMA executive team will be working on new content in 2019 and 2020. We welcome input from members with specific areas of knowledge and expertise who would like to contribute and support the programme. It is vital the content of this programme is continuously checked, validated and updated.

We are now calling for NEW content and would like experts in their field, whether a supplier or distributor to come forward and contribute to the established industry education programme to help maintain the high standards we have set for

the benefit of our members in general and our industry at large. We are particularly interested in content for new on-trend product categories, personalisation and new branding applications, sales team training, and social media.

If you are an expert in these areas or would like to contribute to the only industry training programme by working with the BPMA to write new, relevant and inspiring content, then we would love to hear from you. If suppliers have video content from their factories or would like us to video their products being branded, then please get in touch too.

To discuss the opportunities further please contact Daniela Arena on daniela@bpma.co.uk

HOW DOES THE EDUCATION PROGRAMME WORK?

Each tiered qualification has a credit goal. Credits are obtained by studying a series of mandatory and elective video content which is enhanced by pdf material. The learner must gain 80% in the subject related quiz to be awarded credits. Credits can be accrued by attending BPMA-led seminars and events, organised factory visits and the BPMA Education Day too. Once the credit goal has been achieved, they are eligible to sit the exams.

The education programme offers 14 subject categories. Categories include customer service, decoration, HR/legal, ethics, marketing and product compliance. Within each subject category you can expect to find anything from three to 12 related videos varying in length from 5-35 minutes. There are more than 70 videos to study from, offering more than 20 hours of online video content.

This is a cost-effective training tool which allows business owners to enroll their staff as part of an ongoing development and training programme. It also attracts individuals within the industry who wish to further their skills independently. A Trained in Promotional Merchandise (TPM) qualification can be gained for £175+vat and can be completed within 3-6 months. Access is renewed on an annual basis.



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BPMA EDUCATION PROGRAMME



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BPMA mental health seminar starts important conversation

The BPMA hosted its first regional mental health seminars at Fetcham Park in Surrey and Hotel Football in Manchester in June. The well-attended seminars focused on mental health within our industry. Delegates learned the responsibilities of businesses, how to identify and manage mental health within the workplace, how to create a robust mental health policy and how best to support an individual who has a mental health condition.

Delegates to the events heard from practicing employment law solicitor and mental health advocate Jodie Hill, as well as Dr Sarah Hattam, a GP with more than 20 years' experience. The full day events provided those who attended with a better understanding of the impact of work and non-work factors on mental health and wellbeing, as well as how to create a psychologically healthy workplace. Further takeouts included how to spot a colleague in difficulty and confidently initiate a supportive conversation, and how to identify and manage stress effectively.

Jon Birrell, BPMA CEO, said: "I was very pleased with the support for this initiative and



such an important topic. The dashboard of wellbeing is something all businesses should be sharing with their staff. Thanks to all the members who participated on the days."

Debbie Willsmer from Willsmer Wagg said: "I attended the mental health seminar and found it really useful. Working in a high stress level industry, staff wellbeing needs to be a priority. This is a great start on creating policies, training and understanding as a business owner what our responsibilities are."

Leah Fitch from Cyan group said:

"Fantastic content given by two extremely knowledgeable individuals. It was food for thought – I'm excited to help make a difference within our industry, thanks to learning many new ways of dealing with stress, anxiety and depression within the workplace."

The BPMA plans to organise more wellbeing related seminars in the future. If you have any ideas or suggestions on future topics please do get in touch. The dashboard of wellbeing can be found in our resource centre at bpma.co.uk.



Members offered special Brexit healthcheck deal

With so much being said about Brexit at the moment and the prospect of a no-deal exit from the EU becoming increasingly significant, it's paramount that UK businesses ready themselves for the various different situations that potentially loom.

To prepare for potentially significant change, your business will need to identify the areas of possible impact. By starting that process now, your business will be in a stronger position to determine your priorities for contingency planning and restructuring.

The Institute of Export's Brexit Healthcheck is a good place to start. One of its experts will come into your business and look at the specific potential impacts of Brexit on your business. BPMA Members can secure a £400 discount off this service. The healthcheck takes the following form.

In the morning, there is a presentation covering key Brexit implications. The presentation will

encompass Brexit in general and look at the implications for your business and business sector.

The afternoon sees the discussion turn to putting checklists in place for several crucial operating areas:

Customs

The Institute will review customs processes and procedures in your company, to determine readiness in relation to requirements for Brexit.

Authorised Economic Operator (AEO)

It will review if AEOC (customs simplification) and/or AEOS (safety and security) will benefit your business and steps that can be taken to apply, or maximise use of AEO if your company is already applying for AEO, or is AEO approved.

Transport and Shipping

A review of current arrangements and



transport routes used by your company, and possible impacts that could arise following Brexit.

Checking Origins

The Institute shall review the supply chain and origin of your goods and determine impacts and relevant solutions that will be appropriate following Brexit.

For more details on the Brexit Healthcheck and how to claim your £400 discount please contact Daniela@bpma.co.uk



Compliance: not child's play

Toys are popular merchandise items, and because of their target market, they come with important compliance considerations. Rob Hinchcliffe explains why EN71 should be on your radar

Under the European Toy Safety Directive, all toys have to show they are compliant to EN71 as a legal requirement.

The EN71 standard for the safety of toys made or imported into the European Union specifies the tests to perform to comply with the European directives. Compliance to the standard is mandatory for all toys and the tests are also often used to show compliance to the General Product Safety Directive for child appealing products not classified as having play value. The EN71 standard is divided in 13 parts, this article presents and explains parts 1, 2 and 3 which are the most commonly used parts of the standard.

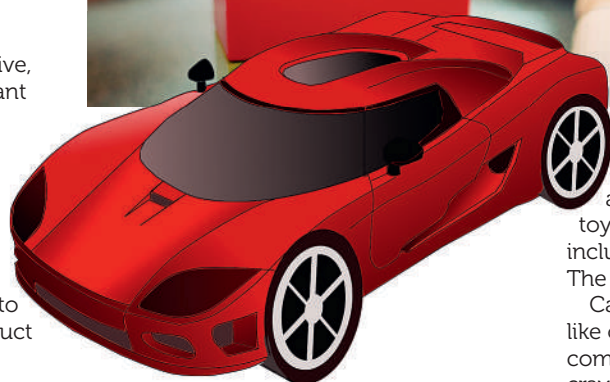
EN71-1: Physical & Mechanical Requirements

The first part of EN71 regulates mechanical and physical properties of toys. The section contains a significant number of important tests. For example, minimum sizes of parts for very small toys are defined, so that babies and young children under three cannot swallow them or choke on them, as well as detection of sharp points or edges, impact hazards and entrapment.

During the design process, buyers and suppliers should be aware of the standard and its various clauses should assist in design and development of all products aimed at or sold to all children.

EN71-2: Flammability

Most materials used by manufacturers to produce toys will burn if exposed to an



appropriate ignition source. To reduce the risks of burn injuries associated with children being in contact with certain toys, different testing methods have been defined to identify a limited rate of spread of flame or maximum 'after flame time' to give time for the child to drop the toy or take distance from it before serious injury occurs.

EN71-3: Migration of Certain Chemicals

The EN71 standard part 3 is focused on analysing the chemicals contained within the toy and the levels in which they are present.

Since July 2013, the regulation has extended the metal restrictions and application scope to a wider range of toys. There are 19 metals restricted now including lead, cadmium and chromium. The limitation varies depending if it is:

Category I – in dry, brittle, powder-like or pliable toy material, such as compressed paint tablets, chalk or crayons, plaster of Paris, or modelling compounds like Plasticine:

Solid materials which may leave residues on the hands.

Category II – in liquid or sticky toy material, such as bubble mixture, glue, or poster paints:

Fluid or viscous materials which can be ingested or have skin contact.

Category III – in scraped-off toy material, such as uPVC, plywood, plush fabrics, or various metals and alloys:

Solid materials which can be ingested by biting, tooth scraping, sucking or licking.

Rob Hinchcliffe is UK hardlines manager at testing and certification company SGS





Business and legal advice with BPMA membership

BPMA members are reminded that their membership provides a range of business services and resources that are specially designed to support your business.

This includes access to free advice on all four of the key areas below. To speak to a specialist, call **0844 561 8133**, quoting the scheme number and BPMA membership number, which can be found in membership packs.

HR & Employment Law Advice

Already in 2019, many changes have taken place in the world of employment law. Several important changes occurred earlier this year in April, including a rise in minimum wages and pension contributions, payslip laws, and pay reporting, to name a few.

With further new developments and changes to come in the near future, it's important to know how to adapt to, and comply with, these laws to protect your merchandise business and avoid risk.

Areas your membership can help with:

- Documentation
- Existing and changing legislation
- Managing sickness and absence
- Redundancy
- Dismissal
- Investigations
- Conduct
- Contracts

Health & Safety Assistance

Unfortunately, all too often, safety can slip down the list of priorities for an employer. However, not only is it best practice to adopt a proactive approach rather than a reactive one, but it is guaranteed to save your time, money, and reputation in the event of an incident.

There are very simple ways to contribute to your employees' safety and wellbeing, and small steps you can take to make your premises safer and reduce risk.

Areas your membership can help with:

- Premises management
- Accident reporting
- Wellbeing
- Hazard management
- Environmental legislation
- Fire safety
- Risk assessments
- Policies

Commercial Legal Help

Commercial legal matters commonly arise during the course of running a business. Commercial law can essentially provide the platform to protect businesses when entering into agreements, and offer resolutions when things don't go as intended.

Areas your membership can help with:

- Company law, including director

liabilities, duties, and company articles

- Partnerships, LLPs and sole traders
- Commercial contracts
- Insolvency
- Data protection, freedom of information and equality act
- Intellectual property
- Property, including access rights, boundary disputes and landlord disputes
- Tort law

Tax Guidance

From employment status to payroll compliance, the wide bracket of 'tax matters' will affect a majority of businesses.

With constant lobbying around IR35 responsibilities and recent, big changes to payslip laws, employers have a growing number of developments to consider and comply with.

Areas your membership can help with:

- Fee protection
- Tax and VAT consultancy
- Compliance checks
- Status
- VAT
- PAYE
- Payroll
- Consultancy

Outstanding business award success for Penn

Outstanding Branding CEO Sarah Penn (pictured centre) was announced as winner of the Woman in Business Award on June 13, at the Southwark Business Excellence Awards 2019.

The prestigious award recognises an individual, whose business acumen, leadership and success sets an example to others, and who has made a significant contribution to the local business community.

At the same awards, Outstanding Branding was Highly Commended in the Employer of the Year category, which recognises companies taking care of their people. It looks for employers with a strategic and committed approach towards employee investment, engagement, welfare, training, development and diversity, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or social status.

Penn, who heads the certified wholly women-owned business, said: 'I'm so overwhelmed to have received this accolade; being recognised for doing the job I love is a phenomenal feeling. For



Outstanding Branding to be recognised in the same night as a Highly Commended Employer of the Year is so incredibly rewarding too, and I'm enormously proud of our management team who have such a huge part to play. Also of course a huge debt of gratitude needs to be paid to my business partner, Andy Thorne, without whom neither me nor the company would be where we are today."



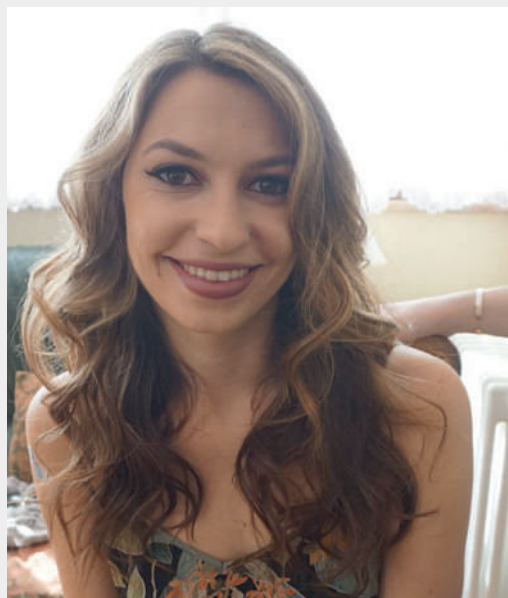
If you have any stories for **Product Media Magazine**, send by email to: editor@productmediamagazine.co.uk

New face at the BPMA

Following its move to new offices in Fetcham Park in Surrey, the BPMA welcomes a new member to the team.

Georgie Yeats (pictured) has been appointed BPMA office administrator and is responsible for the day to day running of the office. She will be the main point of contact for all BPMA enquiries, questions and needs.

Georgie started as a data analyst and found a passion for data, structure and trends. After a few years, she went on to become a marketing manager where she was introduced to the wonderful world of promotional merchandise and the value it holds.



BPMA CALENDAR

2019

11 September

Merchandise World, Stadium MK, Milton Keynes

3 October

BPMA Member Orientation Seminar, Fetcham, Surrey

10 October

Festival of Marketing, Tobacco Dock, London

October

BPMA Compliance Day

Date and venue TBC

2020

12-13 February

Merchandise World, Ricoh Arena, Coventry

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Ten from two



Kashif Siddiquei

Managing Director,
Baby USB

What boxset are you watching and what's next?

I'm currently binge watching Brooklyn 99 and hoping to find something with similar humour for my next must-watch series

Do you have a guilty pleasure?

Anything tech related but I'm not even sure I feel guilty about it

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

I started with BabyUSB and so far, it's been an incredible journey. In the words of the author of one of my favourite books "Experience is what you get when you didn't get what you wanted."

Best piece of advice you've been given?

"If you don't have passion, then you have nothing. If you don't believe in what you are doing, why would anyone else?"

What's the view from your office?

My team who are currently playing with the latest BabyUSB gadget

How do you relax outside of work?

What with feeding, entertaining or chauffeuring my children, I haven't relaxed since 2009

How do your colleagues describe you?

I'd hope the team would say I respect their knowledge and expertise – after all, we've been perfecting our skills for almost 20 years

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

On my journey for self-improvement, somehow, I ended up at Tony Robbins's Business Mastery course. It helped me set a solid path for future development and I haven't looked back. Highly recommended for anyone on a similar path of enlightenment



Russ Coleman

Sales Manager,
Stricker

What boxset are you watching and what's next?

I'm still working my way through all the episodes of Father Ted. All my needs are met here – boxsets appear to be for everyone else

Do you have a guilty pleasure?

Italian motorcycles and Father Ted

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

I sold promotional clocks for a small manufacturer in Leicester in the Nineties. It taught me the UK motorway network

Best piece of advice you've been given?

Back the jockey – but do feel free to give the horse a cursory once-over

What's the view from your office?

My front lawn and next door's cat (although he will have moved by the time of going to press)

How do you relax outside of work?

Playing trombone in bands

Where would you like to be right now?

On stage at the Brixton Academy

How do your colleagues describe you?

They would say: "Ele é um artista que deveria estar se apresentando em grandes locais icônicos de música." (He's an artist who should be playing at iconic music venues.)

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

Leaving my last job, and realising the cost of getting kids through Uni

What's top of your bucket list?

Riding around Italy on an Italian motorbike via Craggy Island and then offsetting the carbon footprint I've created

People



New field sales team for TPW

The Pen Warehouse and Snap Products have added two new field sales managers as part of a national sales team, led by Matthew Dyl, head of sales.

Hannah Bonell is manager for Northern England and Scotland. She brings significant purchasing and account management experience acquired in retail environments. Her colleague, Hannah Whitman will cover the South-West of England.

Hatters continues to grow

Promotional merchandise company, Hatters has welcomed Claire Stott to the team as sales and marketing director, as the company celebrates its 25th anniversary.

Stott has been in the marketing industry for seven years, having previously worked at retail and leisure asset management company Realm Ltd before moving to commercial property developers Orbit Developments in 2014.

She said: "I have known Jo Shippen and the team for years and always admired the way in which the company is run. There's a genuine aim to provide a transparent and exceptional level of service to their customers, and that ethos is something that resonates with me."

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