



Merchandise **WORLD**

THE BEST YET?

Merchandise World puts a
smile on the industry's face p14



CELEBRATING SUCCESS

THE 2019 BPMA
AWARD WINNERS

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WELCOME



Welcome to the latest issue of the BPMA's magazine for the promotional merchandise industry.

The new year began with the annual PSI show in Dusseldorf (see review, p35). Again,

this year, the BPMA managed to secure funding from the Department of International Trade for 10 suppliers. There were certainly some interesting conversations at PSI with members and European distributors concerning exporting from the UK, with very mixed opinions. In this issue you'll see the BPMA's Brexit statement (p50) and also ways to get funding for training through the Institute of Export to help your businesses become stronger during this political and economic uncertainty.

Back to the UK and the BPMA Education Day preceding January's Merchandise World show – read more about both inside. This was a new workshop format which was a resounding success with Bryony Thomas keeping the delegates engaged for the day, discovering ways to identify and fix those touchpoint leaks while re-imagining the sales funnel and challenging perceptions. Delegates also took part in an online Priority Profit Profile which on completion generated a personalised 18-page report putting their marketing leaks in order with a 2-page action plan. Following the event, we extended this diagnostic tool to the wider BPMA membership, who were then invited to attend a follow-up webinar to analyse and discuss the results.

On to the show itself and not only were 80 kilos of pick 'n' mix consumed at Merchandise World, but the show also featured 217 exhibitors and a whopping 1,348 distributor visitors, 25% up on last January. All stands in the show hall were sold out creating a waiting list. The new venues were also announced for the September 2019 and February 2020 shows.

Also sold out was the BPMA Awards Dinner with 350 suppliers and distributors celebrating with the award winners. We were also proud to have been joined by fellow associations from America and Canada, learning from our counterparts and enabling us to work together to deliver more benefits and value to our membership.

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).



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Polyconcept brings in Staples boss as CEO



Polyconcept, the world's largest supplier of promotional products, has announced the appointment of former Staples' executive Neil Ringel (pictured) as its new chief executive officer. The experienced B2B

distribution player was most recently president of North American Delivery for the office supplies giant. Based in Pittsburgh, Ringel will assume full group responsibilities for Polyconcept including its primary operating divisions: Polyconcept North America (PCNA), PF Concept and other global operations. He replaces Gene Colleran, who served as CEO since 2015.

During 23 years at Staples, Ringel held various executive roles with responsibility over the salesforce, digitisation and M&A activity, as well as oversight for the Staples Promotional Products business. He was instrumental in growing the company's B2B division into a \$10 billion enterprise supporting more than 1.5 million customers.

Polyconcept, which is backed by private equity group, Charlesbank Capital Partners, operates on five continents and sells to more than 100 countries worldwide.

Josh Klevens, managing director at Charlesbank, said: "We are delighted to welcome Neil to the company and are confident that his impressive experience and leadership track record will allow Polyconcept to continue its positive momentum while finding new and better ways to serve its customers and forge an even stronger future."

Ralf Oster, CEO of PF Concept, said: "We warmly welcome Neil Ringel to the Polyconcept family. His experience and leadership – both within the B2B domain and our market – will add greatly to the achievement of our challenging ambitions, and to the further development of our company. We are looking forward to working with Neil to build upon Polyconcept's robust foundation and to enhance our value to our distributor partners."

In Europe, PF Concept bought UK manufacturer SPS EU in 2017 and recently announced a consolidation of the businesses under a single PF Concept brand, as well as investment plans.

From left: Gina Tofallis, EMC sales director; Frank Murphy, MD, GeigerBTC; Simon Kay, MD EMC



Geiger continues European expansion

GeigerBTC has acquired London-based distributor EMC Advertising Gifts as part of its continued expansion strategy to support clients in the UK and Europe. GeigerBTC was formed last year by the merger of US family-owned and operated distributor Geiger and British business BTC Group.

EMC has been in business since 1966 and is a well-known promotional merchandise distributor. EMC managing director, Simon Kay said: "We are delighted to become part of GeigerBTC and the expanding Geiger global network. Our companies share similar cultures and ideals. We look forward to being able to offer our multinational clients the enhanced

services that such a union brings."

Frank Murphy, managing director of GeigerBTC said: "EMC is an iconic name in the UK promotional merchandise market and we are extremely proud to be joining forces with Simon and Gina. We look forward to a very successful partnership."

GeigerBTC was founded in 1977 and is based in Hayes, Middlesex with a staff of 70. The company offers on-site decorating, distribution, fulfilment, web development and corporate programmes, and employee store expertise.

Headquartered in Lewiston, Maine, Geiger is the largest privately-owned and managed promotional products distributor in the world.

Goldstar aims to be a force with €2m investment

Pen company, Goldstar, will continue to expand its capabilities this year by investing more than €2m on new technology and services, plus more on extra staff. The company has already spent a total of €3m in Ireland in the last two years.

The investment, to meet increasing customer demand, will mainly be on expanding the company's inkjet and laser printing equipment, particularly on more mirror engraving. An extra seven staff will be employed, mostly in sales, covering the UK and France. This will take staff numbers to 40, double what it was two years ago.

Colin Loughran, general manager (right), said: "We've invested significantly in our laser decoration capability. We can provide high-tech, soft touch pen decoration and 360° decoration and our turnaround times are some of the fastest in the industry."

The company has also been developing its inkjet printing and now has 11

machines producing full-colour imprinting on soft-touch and metal. Full-colour inkjet printing on both sides for double branding and impact is the latest addition, enabling photographic reproduction.

Loughran added: "Goldstar has grown significantly in the past few years and we are actively seeking new opportunities and partnerships to continue our growth plans to become a major force within the promotional trade industry."



Prodir leads on recycled and lead-free pens

Swiss company Prodir is elevating sustainability with its DS Regeneration Pens. The writing instruments are manufactured from 100% recycled plastic and are also equipped with a globally unique refill Prodir claims offers a better environmental balance.

The new Floating Ball Lead Free refill combines, for the first time, a lead-free stainless-steel writing tip with ink that contains no substances classified by REACH as being of 'very high concern' (SVHC). The refill is available exclusively for the three Regeneration Pens DS3, DS5 and DS8.

Made of 100% recycled plastic, the pens can be ordered in colours blue, black and on-trend brown-beige tone, Fango, with a polished casing surface. Soft Touch is an option for all models. The recycled material is produced locally and not imported from Asia.

Each DS Regeneration Pen is discreetly printed with the international recycling symbol.



Pagani focuses on promotional products

Pagani Pens has restructured its activities and brand portfolio. Under new management, the company has been divided into two business units: business related to refill technology components and writing instruments.

In future, the Premec brand will be reserved for the Group's worldwide components business. From January 2019, Premec writing instruments will continue to be marketed under the Pigra brand name. The 'Made by Italians' tagline underscores the Italian identity of Pigra and sets it apart from the 'Swiss made' Prodir.

With its new brand portfolio, in future Pagani Pens intends to concentrate on the promotional products market. Plans are in place to further expand the network of its own sales companies in Europe. Activities in the retail trade were discontinued at the end of 2018.



Golf supplier looks towards a brighter future

TKG Europe has produced a new range of golf towels printed in full-colour on its newly-acquired next generation Epson printer.

In readiness for the 2019 season, the logo golf products supplier has made a significant investment in its print capacity with the addition of an Epson SureColor F9300 wide format dye sublimation printer.

The BPMA member and trade-only supplier has launched the Dormi and Hydra-Lite golf towel ranges, showcasing its new machine's high-quality print abilities with accurate and vibrant colour matching.

Glen Witheford, director, TKG Europe said: "We closely monitor industry trends and are seeing a shift towards hi-tech print options which offer the highest quality finish and ensure our products stand out from the crowd."

TKG is committed to maintaining its low MOQ of just 12 towels and offering free origination and set-up. The new towels are unveiled in the new 2019 TKG catalogue.



Demand for personalisation met by new printer



Printer company, Roland DG Corporation is launching a desktop direct-to-garment printer for cotton-based products.

The VersaSTUDIO BT-12 will be available from April 2019 and will allow

businesses to meet the growing demand for personalisation. The easy-to-use A4 size printer produces full-colour graphics including photos, logos and text directly on a wide variety of cotton-based items, such as T-shirts, tote bags and textile interior decoration products.

Its compact size and affordable pricing enable businesses to offer personalisation services with a low initial investment and in locations where space is limited, including malls, kiosks, apparel stores, hotel gift shops, tourist destinations, and at events.

According to Etsuo Harada, division president of COTO business division for Roland DG, the BT-12 can produce a product in just a few minutes.

"Consumer behaviour has been shifting from consumption to experience due to the diversification of consumer values," he said. "As a result, businesses have an opportunity to offer high-value merchandise such as personalised products to meet customer needs and desires."



Wild Thang maintains support for Liverpool

Liverpool distributor, Wild Thang is continuing its support of the Mayoral 100 Club Initiative in 2019.

The initiative, created by Liverpool Mayor Joe Anderson, gives members access to an extensive range of benefits and experiences including invite only high-profile events, influential networking opportunities, and the opportunity to be drawn as a headline sponsor for the Mersey River Festival. These are aimed at financially supporting the cultural events within the Liverpool City region, that drive the visitor economy by bringing the private and public sector closer together.

Andrew Dwerryhouse, managing director, Wild Thang said the company was proud to be a founding member of the Mayoral 100 Club Initiative and to continue supporting it. "We have seen first-hand the importance of cultural activity in the Liverpool region that is helping grow our local visitor economy and is a genuine driver for growth creating both employment and investment."

Networking opportunities and exposure have helped Wild Thang secure substantial orders, raise its visibility, and supported its own CSR efforts, he added.



TC Branding enlists with Ignite

Catalogue group, Ignite is delighted to announce a new member, TC Branding Group, of the Ignite family.

Princes Risborough-based TC Group is one of the industry's most respected and long-established distributors.

Richard Pettinger, director of Ignite said: "We are delighted to welcome TC Group to Ignite. I have known Mick for some years now and always had a great respect for his company. Their addition can only continue to further strengthen the group."

Mick Humphries, sales director, TC Branding Group said: "We are delighted to be accepted into Ignite. We have some exciting plans for the future currently within the company and our membership of Ignite fits in very nicely with those plans so we look forward to a long and mutually beneficial relationship for both organisations."

The Pen Warehouse helps hospice

The Pen Warehouse has supported a local hospice with a donation of printed pens. Phyllis Tuckwell is a charity close to the hearts of the trade-only supplier as members of staff have had family members cared for by the hospice.

Two thousand Alaska Frost ball pens, printed with the charity's logo, are to be used to help promote Phyllis Tuckwell's 40th anniversary.

The hospice looks after people with terminal illness and supports more than 250 patients each day. Only about 20% of its funding comes from the government – the rest comes from charitable donations and the hard work of a fundraising team.

Jade Fuller, customer service administrator at The Pen Warehouse, met with community fundraiser Samantha West to hand over the pens.





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IN THE HOT SEAT

GARRY HOLLAND,
INNOVATION 1ST

2009 probably wasn't the best time to be starting any business, but when you think you've spotted a gap in the market, there's no time like the present, according to Garry Holland, the founder of Richmond-based Innovation 1st. His company celebrates its tenth anniversary this year, and has grown from a handful of staff in serviced offices, to a 50-strong outfit that ships products to 85 countries internationally.

Holland was working in the City when he and business partners, Ian Mallalue and Mike Jenkinson, saw an opportunity.

"We spotted a gap around innovation and creativity in branded products - we wanted to change the perception of them," he says. "Merchandise is often the last thing that is thought about in a campaign, but if it's properly considered and promoted, it can be an extremely invaluable tool."

Healthy start

Prior to starting the company, Holland had lived in the Far East and Hong Kong and had a background in sourcing that had given him a love of merchandise, and he wanted

to be involved in the industry.

"We were both 29 and I thought that we could build a company that offered more of an agency approach creating bespoke merchandise rather than picking items from catalogues. We wanted to offer a very consultative and design-led approach," he says.

Innovation 1st initially targeted health organisations with creative products that could help change consumer behaviour in areas such as sexual health, obesity and smoking. Early successes included a keyring shaped like a baby that cried randomly to demonstrate the way a child could impact lives, and a money box for smokers to see how quickly their cigarette money could mount up when they quit.

The company grew steadily picking up clients like Weetabix, Aston Villa and the NHS. About six years ago, it decided to invest in its own premises. "It was a big move for us and was expensive, but in terms of the perception of the business, it was important," says Holland.

Next stage

At a time when businesses of all kinds are being encouraged to take a more global view in the light of



Brexit, Innovation 1st has spread its approach into multiple markets. Only 20% of the company's business is in the UK. Global clients mean that it has experience of dealing with campaigns around the world, as well as 'local' clients in regions such as Japan and Singapore. The company has offices in Houston and Hong Kong.

A team of four in-house creatives bolster its design led philosophy. "Our approach is around innovation, understanding the brand, and the value of creatively linking products to brands," says Holland. "We have innovation workshops and brainstorming, and we're very active in engaging clients in the process - we aim to be an extension of their marketing team."

Unearthing gems

Sourcing is another area where the business tries to be different, going beyond the standard industry catalogues. "When you are the first person to see a particular product, it has more of an impact," says Holland. "It shouldn't be a race to the bottom with the same old suppliers. There are some little gems out there and we try to keep moving on to the next one. It's hard to stay ahead of the market - the competition in Europe is tough."

Driving success

One area where Innovation 1st has been motoring ahead is in its involvement with Formula E racing. As an agency, it has been associated with sport brands such as Aston Villa, Arsenal, the Ryder Cup and Liverpool. Its licensing division pitched to represent Formula E and won. Innovation 1st also has an events division, providing a good fit to handle activities such as pop up retail opportunities, as well as corporate merchandise.

The company has even sponsored a team, Techeetah, and produces all of its kit. "It was one of the proudest moments in my career to see the branding on the car," says Holland.

With the tenth anniversary this year, Holland is optimistic and ambitious for the business. "We want to continue expanding and have more international offices. We don't want to attract lots of clients, but we want to attract the best - quality rather than quantity."

For the moment though, he's content.

"Merchandise is a great sector when you're selling and developing cool products. I love my job."



ASK CLIVE

It's a mainstay of most wardrobes, but there are plenty of variations on the classic T, says **Clive Allcott**



From its origin as a workwear to a James Dean-endorsed design classic, the humble T-shirt has found a place in every man and woman's heart and wardrobe.

Its brandability and versatility makes it a fashion and promotional favourite. Named for its T-shape when laid flat, the basic garment has many variations in neck and sleeve.

Crew neck - Probably, the most ever-present T-shirt. It is characterised by a circular neckline that fits snugly, and for a timeless look, nothing beats it.



V-neck - Forms a V-shape at the neck. It can be paired with an unbuttoned shirt wherein the V neckline doesn't show from underneath the shirt.

The Henley Y-neck -

Best described as a hybrid between the crew and the V necklines. It comes with a buttoning placket that runs several inches deep which increases its aesthetic appeal.

Scoop neck - Another variation of the crew neck where the round neckline hangs a few inches below the collarbone.

Set in sleeves

The traditional set in sleeve with the straight up and down seam.

Raglan sleeve - Available in three-quarter and full-length, these take



their inspiration from baseball uniforms. The sleeves are attached to the shirt on a diagonal seam rather than the generic straight up-and-down seam.

Sleeveless - Also known as the tank top, the sleeveless T-shirt has a deeper neck and the straps vary in width.



Cap sleeves - Adding a funky twist, cap sleeves extend to some distance over the shoulders without covering under the arm to

form a cap-like extension.

You can also add a pocket. These carry a pocket on the left breast of the T-shirt - an interesting addition that can add a dash of vibrancy when in a complementary colour.

In conclusion the great thing about a T-shirt is that it can be modified in a million ways to create umpteen styles and yet it

will retain its essence as a long-standing garment of choice for all.

Clive, The Branded Clothing Guru

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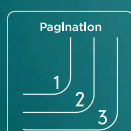
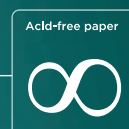
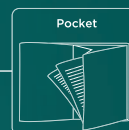
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B-LOONY CUTS PLASTIC USE

Chesham-based promotional printer, B-Loony, has launched an eco-friendly balloon stick as an alternative to the single use plastic sticks which are to be banned by the EU.

The patented BalloonGrip is made from sustainable raw materials which are fully biodegradable, so it could help save thousands of tons of plastic from landfill.

BalloonGrip is a cardboard-engineered balloon holder, designed to hold an inflated natural rubber latex balloon securely in place. Easily assembled for high volume balloon giveaways and suitable for both children and adults, it comes in either colourful party designs or a natural wood effect. An added advantage over traditional sticks is that the BalloonGrip

can be custom printed.

The product was launched at January's PSI show. Andy MacInnes, commercial director, said: "Many of our existing clients have already pledged to reduce their use of single plastics, and with BalloonGrip we can offer an affordable, eco-friendly alternative that allows them to continue planning popular branded marketing activities for their customers."

MacInnes added that as latex balloons are made of natural rubber, when combined with BalloonGrip, the result is a sustainable and biodegradable product.

By introducing the flat-packed cardboard BalloonGrip as a partner product to balloons, B-Loony is also offering clients savings in packaging, storage and distribution costs, compared with the previous plastic alternative.

Sugar cane bags offer recyclability



Nottingham-based carrier bag specialist Oversolve has introduced a bag made from sugar cane ethanol. The company has formed a partnership with Polythene UK Ltd which makes the film, Polyair, that the bag is made from.

The process uses waste products from refining sugar cane to make alcohol which is made into ethanol and then polymer, much like the refining techniques used in making oil-based polymer. The resulting product is carbon neutral and 100% recyclable.

"Currently, plastic products are being targeted by the government and environmental institutions. We are constantly being asked for viable alternatives and we feel this product is," said Steve Thornhill, director, Oversolve. "Of course, this comes at a cost and prices will be more



than our normal bags, but we feel this is a viable alternative to oil-based polythene with green credentials to back it up."

The new bags have certification from the Carbon Trust that they are PAS2050 carbon neutral and are 100% recyclable.

Oversolve is initially marketing a turnover top carrier bag so it will be a 100% 'Polyair' product. Should it prove popular the company can make all other products with this material.



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FEEL THE

Buzz

The start of the year kicked off with the biggest and best Merchandise World yet



"The quality of the people was fantastic. From the start of the first day to the finish it did not stop. The team didn't have a chance to eat. Thanks to Harvey at Zippy for the bag of crisps that we shared. However, it was brilliant."

Sarah Cooper, head of business, AT Cross



"We wouldn't miss an opportunity to exhibit at Merchandise World. An excellent quality of visitor, great place to launch our new branded tech solutions and the organisation is fantastic. We are one rather tired and very happy team."

**Kashif Siddiquei, MD
BabyUSB**



Merchandise World returned to NAEC Stoneleigh, Warwickshire in January to provide the merchandise industry with the sort of kick off it wanted for 2019.

Visitors descended on the show in bigger numbers than ever, confirming the position of Merchandise World as the UK's leading and biggest promotional merchandise trade exhibition. There were 1,348 distributor visitors over the two days, an increase of more than 25% on last January's event. They gathered to do business with 217 top quality exhibitors from the UK and Europe.

Feel the buzz

It wasn't just numbers that were impressive. There was a palpable buzz around the show, which looked great. Exhibitors had really pushed the boat out with impressive and colourful stands that highlighted the industry's claims to be a creative force. With the show sold out weeks in advance, exhibitors had clearly got the message that their presence should make an impact.

Crowded aisles and busy exhibitors were the story of the first day, with exhibitors

Merchandise World in numbers

1,348

DISTRIBUTOR VISITORS

217

EXHIBITORS

5,000

HOT & COLD DRINKS

3,000+

SANDWICHES & PACKS OF CRISPS

80KG

PICK 'N' MIX SWEETS

reporting themselves happy with a steady flow of good quality visitors. This was even more impressive given the yellow weather warnings issued by the Met Office, with snow and ice hazards. However, the promotional merchandise trade still gathered in impressive numbers with distributor visitors arriving from as far afield as Ireland, Scotland, Europe and even the US.

Winning products

The winners in the Merchandise World Promotional Product Awards were presented with their awards at the show (see pages 17-19), and all finalists and winning products were displayed on the BPMA stand. This, alongside many new and hot products throughout the show hall ensured that visitors were presented with many new options in merchandise for the New Year.



For the first time there was no printed show guide, but all of the show information was on the Merchandise World App, including a feature which told exhibitors which visitors were in the show hall.

Gathering point

The show, which is a joint venture between the British Promotional Merchandise Association (BPMA) and Sourcing City, demonstrated its growing reputation as the place the industry meets with several associated events being held simultaneously. The day before the show saw the new format BPMA Education Day held at nearby Chesford Grange hotel. The evening of the first day of the show also featured the sold out BPMA awards providing an opportunity to celebrate the best of the best, and network with friends and industry colleagues.

With Merchandise World organisers reporting a high level of re-signs for the next New Year show at Ricoh Arena in February 2020, this is also expected to sell out. See you in Coventry!

"Two very productive days at Merchandise World 2019 - thanks to our visitors and the organisers alike. We were thrilled with the support and response to our new lines, the Fresh Air outdoor range, our innovative notebooks and the Merchandise World award-winner, the 100% recycled Newchurch tote bag. A great show!"

Nigel Pearce, MD
Bagco



Next Merchandise World dates

Wednesday 11th September 2019 at Marshall Arena, MK Stadium, Milton Keynes

Wednesday 12th & Thursday 13th February 2020 at Ricoh Arena, Coventry

To book or find out more about the next two Merchandise World shows, contact Liz, Katie or Ella on 0844 504 5006 (Overseas Callers: +44 (0)1252 701034), or email: info@merchadiseworld.co.uk

BPMA CHARTER

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BPMA Charter members are perceived to add essential core values to the supply process, with creativity, safety and professionalism being implicit.

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INNOVATION

PRIZED

The latest **Merchandise World Promotional Product Awards** were presented at the show by BPMA CEO Jon Birrell and Sourcing City's Ella Long. Take a bow!

Desktop Ideas

Technology Product of the Year and Pocket Product of the Year



Farrah's

Edible Product of the Year



Listawood

Promotional Bag of the Year and Textile Product of the Year



Will International

Desk Product of the Year



Premier Brands

Most Innovative Product of the Year



Senator

Promotional Pen of the Year



WCM+A

Executive Product of the Year






Check out the full list of winners on the following pages

Merchandise WORLD

Promotional Product Awards Winners 2019

Please contact the winning suppliers for more information about their award winning products!

Desk Product of the Year

PLATINUM AWARD		Smart Divoom Tivoo Will International Ltd
GOLD AWARD		iLo Hub Desktop Ideas Ltd
SILVER AWARD		Full Wrap, Customisable Journals Listawood




Pocket Product of the Year

PLATINUM AWARD		Octopus Booster Desktop Ideas Ltd
GOLD AWARD		High Five Vonmählen GmbH
SILVER AWARD		LEXON MINO Mini Bluetooth Speaker LEXON

Executive Product of the Year

PLATINUM AWARD		Real Wood Column Award WCM&A Ltd
GOLD AWARD		Grove Portable Juice Blender PF Concept
SILVER AWARD		CROSS ATX Metallics Collection CROSS Pens

Edible Product of the Year

PLATINUM AWARD		Oblong Tin - Clotted Cream Toffee Farrah's of Harrogate Ltd
GOLD AWARD		Promo Octagon Box with Bailey's® Truffles Kalfany Süße Werbung
SILVER AWARD		Bespoke Shaped Logo Branded Biscuits Eat My Logo

Eco Product of the Year

PLATINUM AWARD		E Leather Recycled Environmentally Friendly Notebook	Juniper
GOLD AWARD		Newchurch 6.5oz Recycled Cotton Tote	Bagco Ltd
SILVER AWARD		Bio-degradable Sports Bottle	First Editions Ltd

Promotional Pen of the Year

PLATINUM AWARD		Senator® 2796 Nature Plus Biodegradable Ball Pen	Senator® Pens Ltd
GOLD AWARD		Crosby Soft-Touch Gift Set	Goldstar-Europe Ltd
SILVER AWARD		Contour Wood Ballpen	The Pen Warehouse

Promotional Bag of the Year

PLATINUM AWARD		UK Manufactured Full Colour ToteBag	Listawood
GOLD AWARD		Vault RFID 15.6 Laptop Backpack	PF Concept
SILVER AWARD		Craft Paper Bag with Natural Cotton Handles	Gafbros




Technology Product of the Year

PLATINUM AWARD		E-Notebook	Desktop Ideas Ltd
GOLD AWARD		Jill Speaker and Wireless Charging Power Bank	PF Concept
SILVER AWARD		Typhoon Wireless Charger	Snap Products Ltd

Most Innovative Product of the Year

PLATINUM AWARD		W10 Collapsible Cup	Premier Brands (Impressions)
GOLD AWARD		FARE 7709 - Stretch 360 AC Golf Vented	The Umbrella Company
SILVER AWARD		AMERICANO® Cortado	PF Concept

Textile Product of the Year

PLATINUM AWARD		Full Colour Towel	Listawood
GOLD AWARD		Bespoke Caps	Big Brand Sourcing
SILVER AWARD		Eco Bamboo Fibre Scarf	Big Brand Sourcing

CELEBRATING SUCCESS

The annual BPMA Awards shone a light on the industry's top suppliers and distributors as voted by the industry itself

A packed ballroom was the setting for this year's BPMA Annual Awards Dinner. With the industry's movers and shakers gathered at January's Merchandise World exhibition just down the road, Chesford Grange hotel was the place to be. It was also the hottest ticket in town, with the event sold out more than a month in advance and the room full to capacity with 350 promotional players prepared to party.

With most of the guests having enjoyed a bustling first day of Merchandise World, the guests were dressed to impress, in joyous mood and ready to celebrate the best and brightest in the sector. As usual, all of the winners were voted for by the BPMA membership so they represent the businesses and individuals who are rated by their peers.

As well as the awards chosen by the industry, two other awards were made. The award for the best marketing campaign of the year was sponsored by Goldstar, recognising an integrated marketing campaign that delivered on creativity innovation, and return on investment.

The Briman Group also sponsored the Richard Dyson award which recognises distributors who promote British suppliers. The award is named after the founder of Trilogy Lasercraft, who was tragically taken far too young. Richard strived to stay at the forefront of technology and was influential in the creation of the Briman Group.

Following the welcome drinks, the dinner began with a welcome speech from Angela Wagstaff, the BPMA's new Chairman, who commented that the BPMA is in a strong position and gathering momentum with its strategic objectives. She also came prepared with some interesting show statistics, including the amount of pick 'n' mix consumed. Angela Wagstaff also announced that mental health charity Mind will be the BPMA's charity during her term as Chairman.

Jon Birrell, CEO of the BPMA, hosted the awards welcoming on stage the sponsors and winners. He said: "It was wonderful to see so many of my industry friends and meet many new ones. I was very proud and humbled to be on stage hosting the awards and look forward to more industry events and taking the BPMA to another level as we inspire, connect and educate."

The evening concluded with the guests dancing the night away to the Fabulous Fug Band before heading to the bar until the early hours. **PM**





The sponsors

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The Sweet People
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Direct Textiles + Bags
Briman
Just a Drop



Distributor of the Year £500k to £2m, sponsored by PF Concept
WINNER: Willsmer Wagg



Distributor of the Year £2-5m, sponsored by Listawood
WINNER: Allwag Promotions



Distributor of the Year £5m +, sponsored by Direct Textiles + Bags
WINNER: Fluid Branding



Don't miss out

The next awards dinner will take place at the Ricoh Arena on Wednesday 12th Feb 2020. If you would like to reserve a table please contact daniela.arena@bpma.co.uk. This year's event was sold out well in advance, so don't delay.



Marketing Campaign of the Year, sponsored by Goldstar
WINNER: Innovation 1st



Supplier Unsung Hero of the Year Award, sponsored by Everything Branded
WINNER: Claire Etoe, Preseli
(Accepted by Jackie Thomas with Claire on FaceTime - pictured left)



Richard Dyson Award, sponsored by Briman Group
Winner: The TC Branding Group



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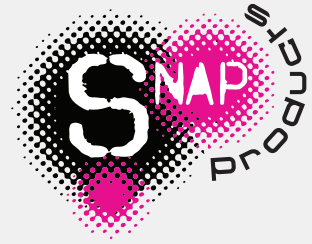
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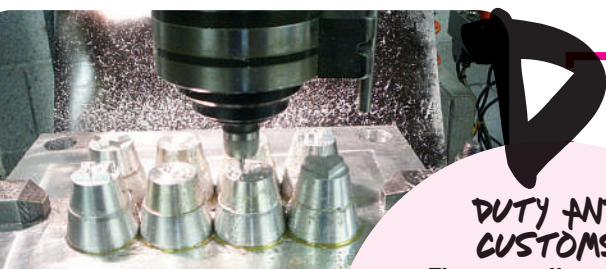
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A-Z OF BRITISH MANUFACTURING

There are more reasons to buy British than mere patriotism.
Let's look at the benefits

A ACCREDITED MANUFACTURERS

Supply chain accountability and safe products are all important and dealing with British manufacturers can provide peace of mind. BPMA manufacturer members offer a variety of accreditations and welcome visits from potential customers wishing to see working practices for themselves.



DUTY AND CUSTOMS

The overall cost of importing goods may prove prohibitive to competitive pricing. Buying British manufactured goods negates the uncertainty of costs and hold ups and secures delivery of a quality product on time.

C Custom design

Many of the companies within the Briman group not only have an extensive range of standard products but are also able to offer fully customised products, making promotional products to end user specific design.

G Great service

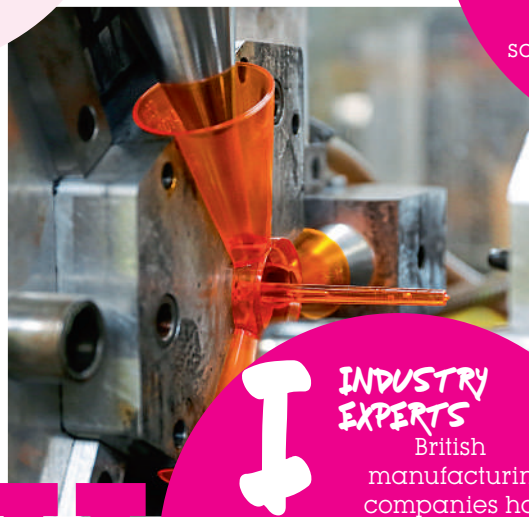
UK manufacturers pride themselves on giving high quality service which may include dedicated account managers, free samples, service level agreements, white label websites, visuals and e-shots.

(No) Haulage headaches

Do the terms LCL, FCL, FOB baffle you? Never fear, as buying British manufactured products avoids the confusion of foreign regulations and other causes of transit delays.

E Exchange rates

These are especially critical during the uncertainty surrounding Brexit - exchange rate fluctuations should never be underestimated. Buying from British manufacturers removes the risk of unexpected exchange rate cost increases.



H

I INDUSTRY EXPERTS

British manufacturing companies have built an unrivalled level of expertise over many years. Their knowledge of the manufacturing process from raw material to end product will assist customers in making appropriate choices to achieve their specific requirements.

B

Briman

This special interest group was formed to support British manufacturers. Members share best practices and regularly meet to discuss industry trends. There are more than 20 companies, supplying everything from awards to zany promotional merchandise ideas. Find out more at brimangroup.co.uk.

F FAMILY BUSINESSES

A significant percentage of Briman member companies are family owned and run, meaning industry knowledge is passed through the generations. Customer care and satisfaction ranks high on the list of priorities for family firms.

F

J JOB CREATION

Manufacturing directly employs 2.6 million in the UK and contributes 11% of the country's GVA (gross value added). British manufacturing companies employ people with a wide range of skill sets and offer training schemes to allow employees to extend and develop their potential.

J

Knowledgeable sales teams

UK manufacturers have highly trained individuals working within their sales teams. They take a pride both in their company and the industry, and many have hands on experience having worked within the production environment.

K

LEAD TIMES

Clients are increasingly wanting products delivered in a tighter time window. Lead times from UK manufacturers are invariably shorter than ordering from overseas. With product arriving with the end user faster, there is a greater possibility of further orders.

L

M

Minimum order

Minimum order quantities are generally lower than buying from overseas. It may mean the unit rates are slightly higher but overall there is reduced financial commitment when only buying the actual volume of stock needed.



NO LANGUAGE BARRIER

British manufacturers speak your language and understand what you want. They can listen, react and advise. Trading with a British manufacturer gives certainty on what you will receive and translators or overseas visits are not required.

N

O

Order process efficiency

Effective back office and production systems support a well-trained UK based staff to offer efficient order processing across a wide range of UK manufactured products.

P

PAYMENT TERMS

British manufacturers will often give credit to approved accounts with agreed payment terms. Overseas suppliers may demand payment up front, in their specified currency. With exchange rate fluctuations, this can introduce a level of uncertainty.



Q

Quality

Quality merchandise carries a strong message and is more likely to be reused and remembered, helping a brand communicate its message more effectively. British made products don't have a monopoly on quality, but it is a key selling point for British manufacturers.

R

RESPONSIBLE CHOICE

It stands to reason that British made products will accrue lower travel miles than those that have been transported from the other side of the world. According to the World Bank, approximately 20% of the world's CO2 production is attributed to transportation. Buying British manufactured products offers a chance to cut the carbon load.

S

Sustainable

Sustainability and environmental impact are important to distributors and end users alike. Purchasing sustainable UK manufactured products with lower carbon footprints than those finished products imported by air or sea, ensures the customer's onward supply chain has a less detrimental impact on the environment.

T

TMA

The Trade Manufacturers Alliance is a

collection of five specialist manufacturers. The companies have come together to promote British manufacturing within the promotional industry and raise standards by all agreeing to strict service level agreements.



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30 YEARS EXPERIENCE

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FAST DELIVERY FROM FE

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UK ECONOMY

Buying British puts money in the pockets of British workers which in turn assists the UK economy. A thriving UK economy creates more demand for promotional products.

Waste Recycling

The aim of all Briman member companies is to provide an eco-friendly, energy efficient, sustainable manufacturing facility. Members take recycling seriously, and some use their waste material to make innovative usable products. Others only use recycled material but all are committed to reducing the level of waste ending up in landfill.

XPRESS DELIVERIES

The 'Amazon effect' is changing the way end users shop. In retail, next day delivery has become the norm and the promotions industry is following suit. Many UK manufacturers are offering express services allowing solutions to orders which have been left to the last minute.

Yes, we can do it!

There is nearly always a manufacturer in the UK who can make exactly what is wanted and in the required timescale. If in doubt, talk to a Briman member.

Value

Purchasing British manufactured goods offers great value, enabling customers to avoid the hidden costs of administration, communication, advance payment and fluctuating exchange rates associated with importing goods.

ZERO SURPRISES

Buying from British manufacturers avoids the surprises of shipping and custom delays and incorrect product deliveries caused by language problems. What are you waiting for?

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INVEST IN THE UK

Briman members are investing in technology, techniques and people to stay ahead of the game, says **Mark Alderson**

Within the UK, manufacturing makes up 11% of GVA, 44% of total UK exports, 70% of business R&D and directly employs 2.6 million people. To sustain these figures, trade magazine, *The Manufacturer*, argues that investment is vital. Fortunately, Briman Group members are doing just that. These investments come in a variety of forms, including improved machine efficiency and capacity, automation, cutting edge manufacturing and print techniques and upskilling of their workforce. These investments are keeping British manufacturing at the forefront of technology as well as supporting the British economy.

Juniper Products has made a conscious effort to bring manufacturing back to the UK. This decision has been supported with more than £200,000 of investment into new machinery during 2018.

Managing director, Andrew Langley confirmed that this investment had provided greater capacity, improved lead times and cost benefits, enabling the company to offer a bespoke service.

Great Central Plastics, known for its range of custom design plastic moulded products, has invested in advanced CAD and CAM technology to aid in-house tooling production. In turn, this has created two new jobs for apprentices in its tool room. Print technology has been at the heart of First Editions investment. It became the first company in Europe to offer rotary digital printing and continues to invest heavily in this print medium.

Kevin Kingdom of UK Lanyards Makers said: "As well as bespoke automatic ribbon cutting and sewing equipment, our key investment this year has been in people. To have a flexible but well trained workforce has been our vision


and we are now in a very strong position to ramp up production to deliver large volumes in a very short lead-time."

Foremost Magnets has invested in two new production lines, due to be commissioned early in 2019, automating the process of mounting magnets. Investing in such equipment has facilitated an increase in project run size, thereby reducing costs and mitigating the effects of the significant labour cost differentials of Far East competitors.

"This means we can compete on the price of large run projects while maintaining UK ethics and production quality," said managing director, Lee Woodcock.


Supporting British manufacturers enables them to continue make these significant investments and remain at the forefront of the industry.

Mark Alderson is chairman of the Briman Group. PPM





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DON'T PILE UP PROBLEMS

With Brexit looming, some merchandise business will be looking to increase stock holdings. **Mike Collins** warns of some credit implications for buyers and suppliers



Politics affects business whether we like it or not. Many have tried to turn a blind eye (and ear) away from the 'B word', Brexit, but there are some key considerations to remember when it comes to the supply of items and the subsequent credit management.

In various industries there has been talk of contingency measures being taken to perhaps mitigate potential supply problems from March. One of the measures being talked about in the merchandising world, in particular is the method of increased stockholding or stock piling.

Pile it high

The likelihood is this will have a greater bearing on the supply of goods or items, such as a distributor ordering ten times as many cups that are manufactured in France, just in case there are increased import duties on shipments post Brexit.

However, there could be occasions where Brexit could have a direct effect on the service industry too. For example, should the price of paper increase, will this have a bearing on training companies that produce

handouts of their presentations?

There may be some who will adopt the mantra 'make hay while the sun shines' but we must all be aware of the risks that increased stockholding may bring.

You've carefully vetted and checked your customers and have determined a credit limit that both you - the supplier - and the client - the buyer - are comfortable with. Should the buyer suddenly exceed this limit, without the guarantee of a pending order to fund the increased spend, are they going to be able to clear the larger supply invoice?

Demand issues

So, the buyer has a warehouse full of stock 'just in case', but a larger stockholding is not a pre-cursor of larger revenue. In fact, it could lead to quite the opposite. Should there not be an increased demand for items, the buyer may be forced to sell at a lesser price, which leads to lesser revenues, a squeeze on their cash-flow and decisions as to which suppliers to pay.

Finally, let's not forget the possible issues the supplier may face with stockholding. The costs

to any supplier in fulfilling a larger buyer's order obviously increase. The question any supplier should ask is can I afford to invest in fulfilling this new order and if so, how can I mitigate the exposure and risk of the costs?

There are a few key principles as to how to mitigate invoice exposure and risk and we've covered some of them previously in our past articles. You can also learn more through simply visiting our website www.accountassyst.com.

For further advice and guidance as to how to avoid Brexit affecting your credit control procedures, as well as any other discussion with regards to risk and recoveries in general, then please don't hesitate to contact us, your approved BPMA credit management provider today. We're always there to lend a hand.

Mike Collins is managing director, Account Assyst ^{PM}







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EURO VISION

BPMA members headed to Düsseldorf for the start of the trade show season

January's rebooted PSI show attracted 17,602 visitors to see 1,084 exhibitors. The 2019 version of the trade show combined PSI, PromoTex Expo and viscom with the ambition of becoming Europe's largest combined event for advertising and selling. More than half of the exhibitors came from outside Germany, representing a total of 38 countries.

Three in one

The new trade show network consisted of six exhibition halls filled with creativity and inspiration, live performances and future labs. The three events covered nearly the entire range of 'below-the-line' marketing under one roof. PSI catered for the promotional products industry; a repositioned viscom is Europe's leading trade fair for visual communication, and the newly created PromoTex Expo, was

conceived as the international trade show for promotion, sports and workwear.

"The time was ripe to create a new, central hotspot for all things advertising and selling, without losing sight of the independent existence and identity of each of the respective industries," said Petra Lassahn, the director of the three shows.

Michael Freter, managing director of Reed Exhibitions Deutschland, said the show was an outstanding result that made a clear statement on the international level. "A real power pack that represents virtually all the key players across all areas of visual, textile and haptic advertising – the trendsetters and innovators of the market."

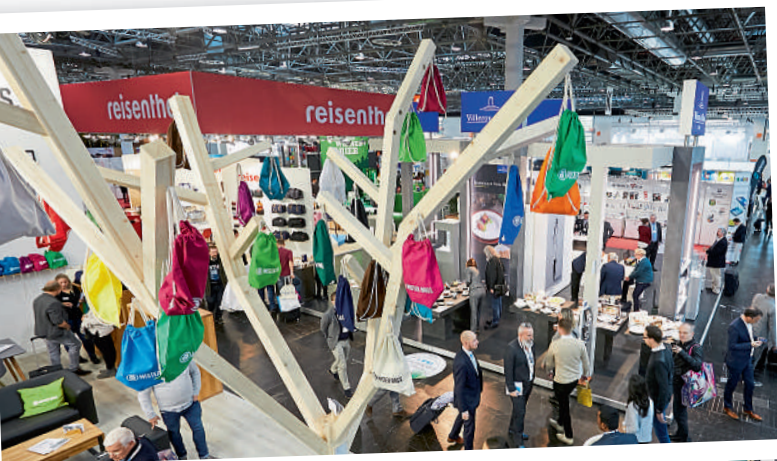
International focus

The level of internationality was high with 58% of visitors travelling from outside Germany,

and one in seven of them from overseas. A total of 81 countries were represented in Düsseldorf.

Market data on the European promotional products industry was revealed at the show. The first market analysis designed to capture Europe-wide trends showed that the promotional products industry turns over €14.9 billion in Europe annually. The Techconsult study 'Industry Structure Analysis 2017-19' was conducted in cooperation with the PSI and supported by a total of 13 partners and associations.

The study shows that more than a third of total European sales are generated by micro-enterprises with less than ten employees, making them the industry's main source of revenue alongside large companies with more than 250 employees. Together, both account for more than half of all sales.




German growth

PSI also saw the latest industry data for the German market revealed by the GWW, the umbrella association of the German promotional products industry. For the previous fiscal year, the GWW calculated industry sales of €3.58bn, a 2% increase from the previous year's €3.5bn.

The result cements the pole position of promotional products as the advertising medium with the strongest reach, said GWW president Frank Dangmann: "Promotional products reach 89% of the population over the age of 14 - more than any other medium. With this kind of reach, promotional products are the undisputed leader."

Tangible results

PSI director Freter pointed to a move towards promotional products as a backlash against the overwhelmingly digital nature of much marketing.

"Zeros and ones alone don't make marketing," he said. "What we're currently experiencing is something of a haptic revolution. These days, in the age of digital reproducibility and arbitrariness, people are looking for brand experiences that are real and multisensory. This is a megatrend which of course has a positive impact on the promotional products industry." 

BPMA @PSI

The BPMA's main objective at PSI was to encourage European distributors to buy from the UK, which was not an easy task during Brexit negotiations.

As in previous years, the BPMA's Daniela Arena successfully bid for Department of International Trade funding, achieving grant funding for eligible businesses towards the costs of exhibiting at overseas trade shows through their Tradeshow Access Programme (TAP). The BPMA acts as the TAP trade challenge partner, whose role it is to lead the businesses who take part as a group to generate export sales for UK business. This funding is specifically for PSI. This year, Daniela secured funding for 10 suppliers. It is currently unclear whether there will be funding in 2020 but this will be clearer following the outcome of Brexit.

The association also connected members at a drinks reception held on the BPMA stand on the first afternoon of the show. In addition, the BPMA organised a networking meal for the Department of International Trade funded suppliers and Briman Group members, followed by the customary visit to the Irish Pub.



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FACE THE FUTURE

Technology is finding new ways of allowing transactions, says **Matt Pluckrose**



Facial recognition used to be about allowing digital cameras to take better pictures by positioning and focusing on a face. This technology has upgraded immensely and you can pay for things by simply using Face ID.

The technology is combining with others to revolutionise the way we shop. We are familiar with barcodes, but they can only store a small amount of information. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) are very small chips that can be scanned from

a distance. Already used in payment cards and employee identification, RFID is playing a bigger role in store.

Mobile connects

In many countries you can now pay with Apple Pay, which uses Face ID for verification. Less known in the Western world is the app WeChat, that is used by more than 902 million people in Asia. In China people literally do everything via their phone. From paying bills to making a hospital appointment, everything is done via WeChat, and it uses Face ID.

Amazon Go

It seems one technology is not even fully adopted before it is replaced with a new one. Amazon is leading the way with its new concept retail experience that uses all the latest technology. Amazon Go combines AI, deep learning algorithms and RFID sensors in an

intelligent concept store. You just grab and go, and payment is transferred from your bank account.

Customers log in via the Amazon Go app before walking into the store. Once inside, cameras keep track of your purchases using facial recognition software. The products in the store all contain RFID chips that register where the product is located and whether you pick it up. Amazon calls this 'Just Walk Out Technology' as cashiers are not needed. There are six Amazon Go stores in the making already.

Of course, there are implications for customer service. Store staff are experts so the future may combine online and offline service. However, technology is set to play a bigger role and your face could be the key.

Matt Pluckrose is managing director of Desktop Ideas



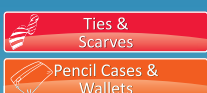
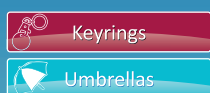
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ARE YOU READY FOR BREXIT?

A new training course will prepare exporters for changing circumstances, says **Lesley Batchelor**



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 prepare themselves for the various scenarios that are potentially looming.

There is uncertainty about what Brexit will hold, but businesses need to ensure they have an understanding of how customs procedures and checks work, in case they become the order of the day in 2019, 2020 or beyond.

According to the Institute for Government, there are 180,000 businesses trading goods between the UK and the EU who will be required to complete customs declarations for the first time.

Even if there is a Brexit deal, we will need

to know about customs procedures as the EU is now an export market and you will need complete export documentation to trade with member countries.

Aside from Brexit, as a nation we need to look further afield at the opportunities outside of the EU, for the sake of our economy and to meet growing demand for British goods throughout the rest of the world. Knowledge of customs procedures and documentation will be a necessity for companies looking to seize those opportunities.

The Institute of Export & International Trade has been supporting the interests of everyone involved in international trade for over 80 years. Our Customs Procedures & Documentation one-day training course offers a very detailed and comprehensive look at the information that is required to be

submitted to customs to enable goods to be imported and exported. It also looks at the differences between EU and non-EU trade.

This course will equip attendees with the information to be able to understand what is required to comply with customs and preparing for an audit.

Businesses can get grants to cover up to 70% of the training costs, but hurry as applications will close on 5 April 2019, or earlier if all of the funding is allocated.

To find out more about our training courses and the grant funding visit export.org.uk/page/TrainingCourses or call 01733 404423.

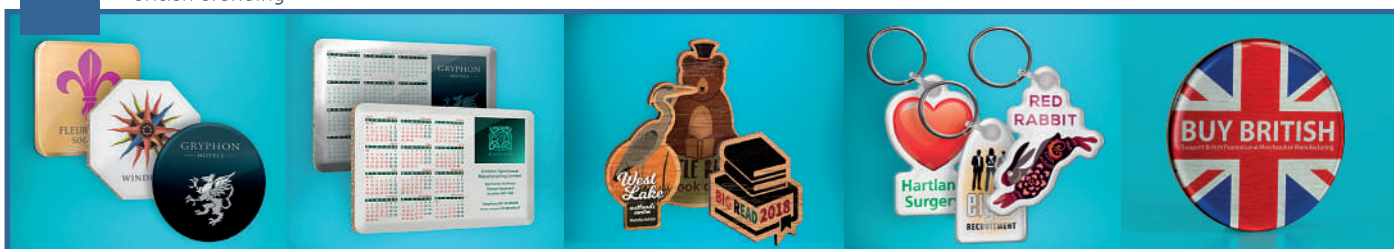
Lesley Batchelor is director general of the Institute of Export & International Trade. See page 50 for the BPMA's statement on Brexit



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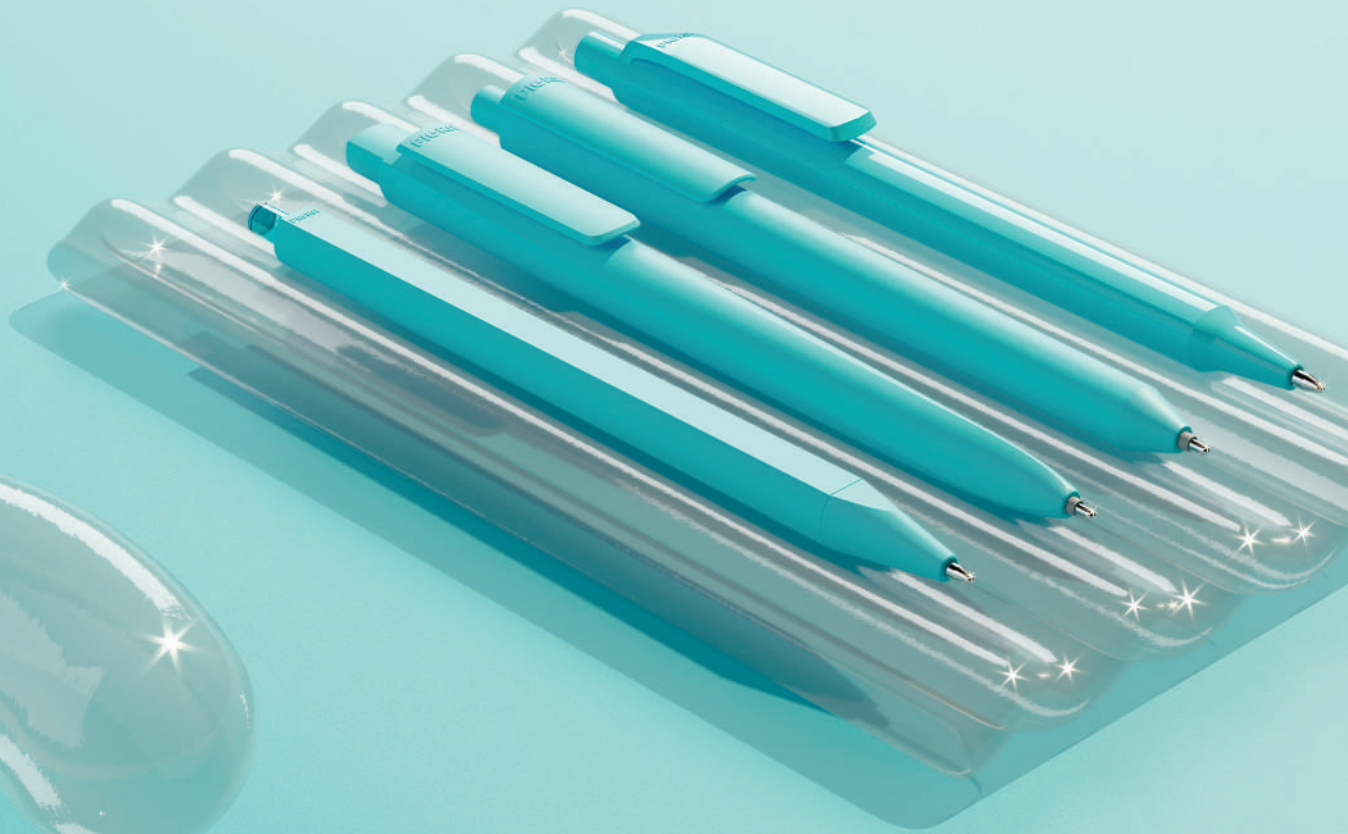
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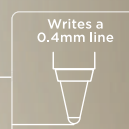
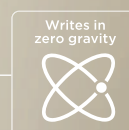
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SOURCING NOT SHOPPING

Choosing and ordering merchandise is a complex business that demands time and attention, says **Deborah Reese**

Perhaps in the 21st Century we are so accustomed to buying commodity items off the shelf that we no longer think about any product in its raw state. Do we associate meat with an animal, or cotton T-shirts with a plant? Probably not.

This holds true for the promotional product industry, where customers may not understand the time required for the complex processes involved. In turn, this can limit product creativity and result in a lack of bespoke ideas being offered to the end user. In a world requiring instant responses and recognition, we need to educate the end users and the premiums industry that China, where many products are manufactured, does not hold their product, branded or unbranded, on a shelf just waiting to be bought. Instead, China has suppliers of raw materials who supply to manufacturers, all awaiting guidance on what the buyers would like to procure.

The right questions

Sourcing is a simple word for an incredibly complex engagement, one which can be fraught with issues if potential problems are not pre-empted. Take the starting point of design. Did the designer check the product can be made from a technical point of view? Have they considered budget requirements, safety, and timelines? I am convinced that vast sums of money are wasted paying agency fees when

the agency has no comprehension of the questions they should be asking, or worse still no duty of care to ask.

With the design done, or the brief completed, a more detailed picture of the enquiry is required, including such information as the timeline required, the level of audit the factory has to have, which three factories to go to, and testing and QC requirements, before approaching merchandisers or factories, normally both, to ensure we are safeguarding your enquiry as much as possible. Sometimes a client will send this over at 4pm expecting we can just call the 'big Chinese superstore' for a landed price back by 5pm. It just doesn't work like this.

Build in time

Early starts in the UK frequently allow us to work with China in live time in order to quote within 24 hours for a straightforward item. However, the time zone difference means we are pushing our team or our trusted factories to price everything on the same day, which isn't ideal if they are to be under less pressure and will quote accurately.

If the enquiry has items from different categories with different quantity requirements, we can be going to more than 20 factories, and then working out all the volumes and duty rates for each item and each quantity, in order to quote one price. There isn't an automated way to do

this as every single quoted item is different in its size, print requirement, quantity, duty rate, packing specification and timeline.

Suppliers who know a little can end up quoting an end price without real accuracy paid to each of these points. If any one of the above areas is incorrect, it can massively affect the end price or mean corners are cut, such as using unaudited factories, resulting in inferior quality products.

If the industry starts to understand the complexity of sourcing, and sees its true challenges we can work together to encourage China's manufacturers to respect the audits we ask for, to ensure social standards continue to matter and that pricing is fair. Brands can then spend their marketing budgets on items which send the right message.

Experience counts

Sourcing should not be confused with shopping. You can shop from a catalogue, but you don't really need a professional sourcing company for that. When it comes to the complexity of sourcing and supplying from scratch, it pays to work with a company that has the experience and relationships to deliver products that make your brand stand out.

Deborah Reese is co-director, Javelinas Group

MARKETING

March is a busy month for two major end user shows that the BPMA supports. What's on offer?



MARKETING WEEK LIVE

6-7 March,
Olympia,
London

Marketing Week Live brings the marketing that matters to life, through an interactive exhibition floor, curated expert content programme and a variety of networking opportunities.

This is the perfect show for hungry marketers looking for answers to problems they're facing day-to-day. Visitors will come away with a wealth of experiences and solutions to some of marketing's trickiest obstacles. This truly is a chance for marketers to take charge, impress the boss while networking with a myriad of experts and exhibitors, including the BPMA.

Visitors will also have access to a co-located event, the Insight Show. As the show for all things research and data analytics, it's an ideal chance to get to grips with this fast-paced industry by interacting directly with the experts. The exhibition floor is a hot-list of need-to-know suppliers, while the show also hosts its own agenda of content.

Discover more details at
marketingweeklive.co.uk



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CENTRE STAGE



B2B MARKETING EXPO

27-28 March,
Excel, London



The tools, techniques and systems revolutionising the world of marketing will again be taking London by storm for yet another instalment of the coveted B2B Marketing Expo.

All under one roof, experts from the likes of Hubspot, LinkedIn, The DMA, Fujitsu, Smart Insights and the BPMA will be on hand to enlighten visitors with the very best marketing guidance available; while an array of the industry's biggest brands and most innovative suppliers will be showcasing the solutions shaping the future of marketing.

Visitors will also get unprecedented access to the Marketing Technology Expo, Sales Innovation Expo, Call & Contact Centre Expo, and Customer & User Experience Expo. There is a combined line-up of 1,000 cutting-edge exhibitors, 500 educational seminars and 200 interactive masterclasses.

Head over to b2bmarketingexpo.co.uk for more information.



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PROTECTION BUILT IN

Contactless cards offer convenience, but need robust protection, says **Rob Rostron**

The essence of every solution developed by VoyagerBlue stems back to the 35 years spent delivering advanced passenger processing technology to the world's travel industry, including airports, airlines, and governments responsible for securing borders.

Passport wallets and other holding devices such as sleeves have a detrimental effect on the ability of the travel industry to process passengers, as cards and passports have to be removed at an inspection point or at a Metro barrier, prior to processing. If the passengers of an Airbus A380 arrive at immigration at the same time, seconds by the individual becomes minutes and hours for border management.

VoyagerBlue concentrated on 'inserts' inserts that simply, quickly, and securely slip inside wallets, purses and passports, allowing secured documents

to function under our control efficiently.

Furthermore, sliding a shield next to the card or cards we want protecting allows the use of existing wallets and purses, while allowing a Metro card to function without having to be removed, and protecting other cards from accidental payment.

The integrated technology used was specifically designed for VB in 2005 by a UK university. The brief was to find a solution to protect 13.56 MHz RFID documents, with maximum protection, production efficiency and longevity, with no degradation in shielding performance.

By comparison, sleeves utilise extremely thin aluminium foil, are generally disposable and can degrade over a short time, forming microscopic cracks which can allow the RF to penetrate. They are also time consuming to use because of the need to remove a card and replace it each time.

We offer a 98% passive shielding



capability for up to three contactless cards, carried correctly, a UK manufactured ISO standard plastic card offering front and back branding space. A VB card shield offers all the simplicity of use, robustness and longevity needed to protect a client for many years via a shielded business card, member card, loyalty card or marketing giveaway or membership bundle.

Rob Rostron is head of business at VoyagerBlue



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SEEN IN THE RIGHT COMPANY

Brands can latch on to the popularity of cycling with a safety message, says **Matt Lake**

With another British win in the Tour de France in 2018 and the increasing popularity of cycling, riders of all abilities are finishing their winter training and preparing for the spring and summer ahead.

The health benefits of cycling are undeniable, as too is the increasing number of Lycra clad humans (including myself), who take to cycling year-round. The elite athletes at the top of the cycling pyramid are underpinned by legions of mere mortals, many of who are 'serious' about their fitness, and all trying to do their best.

Many cyclists have an impressive disposable income at their fingertips, making them a target group for advertisers of everything from banking to cars. You are more likely to see Bradley Wiggins with his bike on the roof in a car ad, rather than golf clubs being shouldered from a spacious boot.

Although cycling is probably one of the healthiest changes you could make in your life, it doesn't come without risk.

Keeping safe while sharing the road is essential and cyclists are always the vulnerable party. Most serious cyclists put safety at the top of their shopping list, and manufacturers are building reflective and hi-vis into their designs and products as it's such an important selling point.

There is also great potential and opportunity for the business gift industry to offer clever and inventive solutions to tick the CSR box for companies and organisations. For example, an insurance company would not find a better giveaway than a reflective sticker to keep you safer on the road. Likewise, a travel company would do well to offer a reflective bag-tag or luggage label.

It's important to offer a range of products for your customers to put their name to, that reflect beyond the highest standards. So, whether you love or loath the Lycra, there is opportunity for creative thinkers to offer customers a gift that could save a life.

Matthew Lake is director of Scanglo 

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MOVE TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE RESULTS

Education Day took on a new form this year focusing on what participants need to know to build their businesses

The BPMA Education Day took place the day before Merchandise World. This year's event took a new approach that looked to deliver actionable learning that was targeted at the particular requirements of the businesses and roles of those who took part.

Personal plan

Feedback has been great following the workshop which was facilitated by Bryony Thomas and aimed at exploring touchpoint leaks while re-imagining the sales funnel.

Thanks to all those who took part in the day and completed the Profit Priority Profile.

Created by Bryony, this diagnostic tool produced a personalised 18-page Profit Priority Profile, putting your marketing leaks in order, with a 2-page action plan on the areas that the answers told us you most need to focus your marketing efforts.

Learning for all

It's full of ideas of small tweaks that can be made to kick-start your journey to truly sustainable sales results. The results of this also gives the BPMA a member-wide indication of where it can assist in providing content, support or education.

In February we had the pleasure of being

able to extend the Profit Priority Profile to the rest of the BPMA membership.

The content worked for both distributors and suppliers. One of the delegates, Dave Kruk, sales manager at supplier Promo Trade Co said: "The BPMA Education Day was fantastic. From the minute it started we were completely engaged and involved with Bryony and she made everything relatable and fun. I came out of the day with a new found energy and enthusiasm to change some of the processes we have internally to maximise engagement with our customers as well as improving customer service and marketing activity. I've already started going through the workbook with some colleagues to get their views and

feedback and will eventually do this with everyone within Promo Trade Co. Thank you for an extremely informative, interactive and worthwhile experience.'

Feedback

Speaking about the event, Bryony Thomas said: "The Education Day was incredible. Being able to work with people through the whole process, with time for people to think and ask questions meant that everyone could get enormous value for their businesses. I've never had so many follow-up emails from people telling me what a difference it's already made."

Once completed, a link was sent to download a digital copy of Bryony's multi-award winning book, Watertight Marketing.

Jon Birrell CEO of the BPMA said: "I was so pleased with how the day went and that the audience was engaged and participating. The feedback forms also proved that the new training style workshop was a success, in addition to the added value with the Profit Priority Profile and follow-up webinar. We're looking forward to making the next one even better."

The BPMA would like to thank its Education Day sponsor PF Concept UK. 



DRILLING DOWN

Education Day facilitator, Bryony Thomas hosted a live webinar on 27 February to run through the results and look at how participants could get the most from their report using it as a growth tool with their teams. This session was exclusively for BPMA members.

In this live online session, the following was covered:

- What's included in your profile report?
- How your ratings were determined?
- How was your priority sequence calculated?
- Leak tweaking case studies from clients.
- Using your profile as a growth tool.

- Using your profile with your team.
- Answering your questions about it.

We also ran through some of the results we've seen from across all participants. At time of print, the results were as follows:

- 61% of participants found their biggest issues in the Adoption & Loyalty stages of the customer journey.
- 28% found their focus in the Evaluation & Trial phase.
- Only 11% found that their focus should genuinely be on generating Awareness & Interest (or lead generation).

OBITUARY - DAVID DAWSON

The BPMA is saddened to inform the industry of the passing of David Dawson of Promonet, who was found in his home on Sunday 10th February 2019, aged 38 years.



David Dawson operated within the industry for many years and was one of the founders of Promonet and Promart software. Promonet worked closely with many supplier and distributor businesses, including the BPMA, offering a wide range of IT services and support, such as website builds and integrated software programmes.

Daniela Arena, BPMA Operations Manager commented: "We are sad to learn of David's sudden death. He was a hard worker and was passionate about the industry. The BPMA had worked closely with David for many years. Our thoughts are with his family, especially his two young children who he adored, at this sad time"

The funeral will take place on 13th March. The family have yet to announce the future plans for Promonet but anyone concerned is advised to contact Daniela Arena at the BPMA.

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Brexit: our industry voice

With the uncertainty over Brexit ongoing, the BPMA has sent this statement to all members

"As we are sure you are all aware the current events in Parliament are unprecedented. The uncertainty over the Brexit negotiations is affecting confidence across the market and is proving wearing on our industry.

There are a number of possible outcomes as to how the UK could leave the EU or the possibility still remains that we could have a further referendum which will lead to a protracted period of uncertainty.

It is at these times that the industry more than ever needs a strong trade association.

Industry contribution to the UK

Our sector contributes over £1 billion to the UK economy and currency fluctuations, trading challenges and politics are impacting our ability to do business.

The end user market predicts static spend and to counter this, the broader marketing industry is prompting activation investment. As a result, we are presented with an immense opportunity to demonstrate how our industry can grow brand resonance and

recall through physical brand experience – shown to be one of the most effective mediums.

Supporting our members

As an industry that relies heavily on imports from global supply chains, we are discussing our business concerns with the Department of International Trade (DIT) to look at how the BPMA can further protect our members' interests at this time.

As part of this challenge, we are also looking for our members to share with the BPMA team their specific experiences to understand your position and how we can best support you during this period. All information is shared in the strictest confidence and will not be discussed outside of the immediate BPMA team.

With further votes due in Parliament, we appear no closer to the 'real' scenario we may be facing and understanding the very real and immediate challenges you face is imperative – together with the positives that could arise. As your trade body, we will



be keeping you updated on news and views as more information comes to light.

If you would like to discuss your specific challenges your business is facing, please contact me at jon.birrell@bpma.co.uk or +44 7595 710 338 for a confidential conversation.

We will then aim to publish an update to our members as to our view on how Brexit will affect our members and how the BPMA will support you in these challenging times."

Jon Birrell, CEO BPMA

Grants and discounts available for BPMA members

BPMA members can access special deals on courses that help will help them to up-skill in readiness for the 29th March. The courses are organised by the Institute of Export & International Trade in association with HMRC.

Lesley Batchelor, director general of the IOE, and a speaker at the BPMA's Brexit seminar in Farnborough in September, said that the Institute had been asked to put on an extra 84 courses in the next three months to cater for the need within business.

"According to the Institute of Government, there are 180,000 businesses that only deal with the EU and have not ever used or availed themselves of documentation for international trade. These businesses are, obviously, going to need to find out quickly how to complete the necessary procedures," she said.



A one-day training course, Customs Procedures and Documentation, is being run at various locations and around the UK in March and April. It will start to help businesses complete the documentation and ensure that they are compliant with the information that they need to supply to their agents or transport companies.

The course is £399+VAT but BPMA members can get it for £299+VAT. Companies may also be eligible for government funding covering up to 70% of the cost of this course and others run by the IOE. Contact the IOE for further information – export.org.uk.

Training courses

The Customs Procedures and Documentation is running in the following dates in March. Check export.org.uk for details and April dates:

- 4 March – Edinburgh
- 5 March – Bristol, Aston
- 7 March – London, Manchester, Glasgow
- 8 March – Warrington
- 11 March – Belfast, Gateshead
- 12 March – Bristol, Warrington, Birmingham
- 13 March – Leamington Spa, Aston
- 14 March – Gateshead, Reading
- 15 March – Bridgend
- 18 March – Belfast
- 19 March – Bristol, Aston, Warrington, London, Glasgow
- 20 March – Edinburgh, Gateshead
- 22 March – Warrington
- 25 March – Warrington
- 26 March – London, Leamington Spa, Belfast
- 27 March – Warrington, Aston
- 28 March – Reading
- 29 March – Gateshead



Get up to date on new payslip regime

From the 6 April 2019, new rules will change how you issue payslips. With the imminent changes approaching, this useful guidance from Croner - The British Promotional Merchandise Association's trusted HR and employment law partner - will help to prepare your business.

Preparing for change

Previously, only your staff classed as employees needed to get written itemised payslips. You didn't need to itemise payslips for any staff classed as 'workers'.

As of April 2019, you'll need to give itemised payslips to your employees and your workers, or you'll be breaking the law. Itemised payslips will make it easier for HMRC to spot and prosecute businesses that pay below the national minimum wage.

The items needed on all payslips

From April, you'll need to break down your workers and employees' payslips according to pay and deductions. Payslips must include:

- Gross salary
- The amount deducted from pay, and why
- The net take home after deductions

- The amount and method of any part-payment (i.e. if you pay a worker £1,500 a month but they get £500 in cash and £1,000 in BACS)
- The number of hours where pay varies depending on the amount of time worked

Workers and employees

The difference between employees and workers isn't always clear.

An employee is someone who works for you under a contract of employment. They have full employment rights.

Workers are different. Like employees, they have a contract with you to do work and be paid for it. Unlike employees, there is usually no 'mutuality of obligation' between worker and employer. This means employers don't have to offer workers work, and workers may turn down any work offered. Workers also have fewer rights than employees.

When it comes to payslips everyone will fall under the same rules from April. But you still need to look into your workers' payslips carefully because...

Workers now have greater legal rights
A worker who doesn't receive an itemised

payslip can now take you to an employment tribunal. At a tribunal, you'll need to prove that you gave the worker a compliant payslip or you could be found to have breached the worker's rights.

Get ready for April

First, identify the workers in your business who don't receive itemised payslips.

Determine their working hours and job functions, and how these relate to pay. You'll then need to work out how much money you take from their paycheque, and why.

Deductions are complicated, but they're important to get right. Check if an employee gets the same amount for different tasks, or if you pay overtime for different hours worked. Calculate how much you charge them for uniforms or equipment. Record any pay docked for absence or lateness. And make sure you include any salary sacrifice for a non-cash benefit, such as accommodation or transport.

If you have any further questions about the payslip changes or other employment issues, contact the BPMA to make use of its legal helpline service.

Introducing: Cup Print

Edward Pinnock, UK business development manager, gives the lowdown on the business

Give us a snapshot of the business

Cup Print has been a multi-channel supplier of printed paper cups since 2009 with much experience in high-speed commercial printing and packaging. As a Huhtamaki company, Cup Print forms part of a global packaging specialist with offices in Ireland, UK, US and Europe. It offers bespoke printed paper cups to suit any requirements including short-run and fast turnaround solutions.

What made you join the BPMA?

It's important that the company does what it can to engage with its customers, those interested in what we do and the promotional merchandising industry in general. Many of our customers already hold membership so this was an easy



decision for us and a great way of branching out.

How are things going at the moment?

We are seeing consistent growth from our more environmentally sustainable products such as the reCUP, our recyclable paper cup.

What's your USP?

We can take any bespoke order, big or small, and turn it around in 15 working days.

What trends are you noticing at the minute?

Ensuring that we do what we can for the environment and reducing plastic use is really important so we are supporting the demand for innovative products in this area.

Give us a prediction for the year ahead in merchandise?

Companies will continue to focus on what products are made of and so will the consumer. So, we'll see more innovation and choice as a result.



Time to tee off for the BPMA Golf Day

A date has been announced for this year's BPMA Golf Day. The event, which was held for the first time last year, will once again be held at Burnham Beeches Golf Club near Slough, on 15 May.

The event is a fantastic day of golfing, socialising and networking for all suppliers and distributors. Last year there were around 32 golfers - a mixture of distributors and suppliers - endeavouring to win the prestigious event. This year, the numbers are being increased to avoid disappointment. However, don't leave entry too long as it is again expected to be popular.

There is a good selection of hotels nearby for teams that wish to stay over to continue their networking and celebrations. The BPMA can provide additional details.

Golfers will compete for the BPMA Golf Day Team Winner trophy, kindly supplied



by Crystal Galleries, which also supplies the BPMA Golf Day Individual Winner trophy. Laser Crystal is also sponsoring the day and supplying additional trophies for challenges during the day.

Last year's winners, the BPMA Stableford Team, is sponsoring the individual trophy.

Other sponsorships are available.

Teams of up to four can be put forward, and individuals are also welcome to enter. The price is £130 for BPMA members and £155 for non-members.

For more information on the Golf Day, including booking and sponsorship, contact daniela.arena@bpma.co.uk. Organiser Clive Allcott can answer any golf or logistical questions on clive@screenworks.co.uk.



BPMA CALENDAR

2019

6-7 March

Marketing Week Live, Olympia West, London

20 March

Haptica Live, Bonn

27-28 March

B2B Marketing Expo, Excel, London

15 May

BPMA Golf Day, Burnham Beeches Golf Club

11 September

Merchandise World, Stadium MK, Milton Keynes

2020

12-13 February

Merchandise World, Ricoh Arena, Coventry

Comments on Golf Day '18

"A big thanks to Clive and the BPMA. It was one of the best organised and most enjoyable golf days I have had the pleasure to take part in. He even got the weather perfect."

Matt Pluckrose, Desktop Ideas

"Great food, great atmosphere, brilliant day. I'm looking forward to next year when hopefully I'll be able to get my hands on one of the beautiful awards."

Brian Bent, BTC Group

"Thanks for yesterday it was a really enjoyable and very well organised day. A fantastic golf course, good company, great food and obviously the weather made it perfect."

Steve Gadd, Premier Impressions

"Great to catch up with suppliers and colleagues in a relaxed environment, and hopefully a permanent fixture in the calendar."

Andy Francis, ESM Branding

BPMA GOLF DAY

Are you a budding Golfer?

Then the BPMA need you to attend their Annual Golf Day.



Date: Wednesday 15th May 2019

Venue: Burnham Beeches Golf Club, Green Lane, Burnham, Slough, Bucks, SL1 8EG

www.bbhc.co.uk

Format

- AM: Meet for coffee / tea and bacon butties
- AM: 9 hole scramble
- Lunch: Sandwiches and fries
- PM: 18 hole stableford better ball competition
- 3 course evening meal with awards
- Prizes for winners AM and PM, nearest the pins, longest drive plus lots more
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➤ Contact

Daniela@bpma.co.uk for full details

BPMA member **£130** per person

Non BPMA member **£155** per person

(4 people in a team)





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

Ten from two



Nigel Pearce

Director,
Bagco

What boxset are you watching and what's next?

I'm not a boxset kind of guy but I am trying to get my head round the latest True Detective series

Do you have a guilty pleasure?

Downloading dodgy old funk tunes

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

I was a rep for what evolved into PF Concept, eventually becoming MD. Latterly, that taught me I am useless at 'sucking up' in a corporate environment, so I'd best go work for myself

Best piece of advice you've been given?

Have you considered working for yourself?

What's the view from your office?

A lovely view of next door's warehouse

How do you relax outside of work?

Playing, watching or coaching cricket figures strongly, as does watching rugby

Where would you like to be right now?

At the Kensington Oval, Barbados watching England v West Indies.

How do your colleagues describe you?

Tedious, grumpy, fat - responses that shot back at me ridiculously quickly. Never work with your wife

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

If you trust your instinct, nine times out of 10, your first thought is the way to go

What's top of your bucket list?

The world's a big place and there is a lot of it I haven't seen yet



Diane Anderton

Marketing & new product manager, **Goldstar**

What boxset are you watching and what's next?

Narcos: Mexico and The Marvelous Mrs Maisel

Do you have a guilty pleasure?

Bourbon creams

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

Product Source (with George Goodfellow) and those who knew him will understand - patience is a virtue

Best piece of advice you've been given?

If it's not broken go and break it

What's the view from your office?

My cockapoo (Maggie) stalking pigeons in the garden

How do you relax outside of work?

Regular stuff like eating out, gym, dog walking (the latter two so I can do the first one)

Where would you like to be right now?

Somewhere warm

How do your colleagues describe you?

Resilient and fluffy (Blackpool word for creative). Oh, and a little bit mad

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

Ten years ago, I had to choose between starting my own business in dog grooming, training and psychology, which I'd been training for, or going to SPS. SPS posed the bigger challenge, and the psychology training was put to good use

What's top of your bucket list?

To buy another cockapoo, just have to wear the husband down a bit

People



New appointment takes the cake

Eat My Logo has announced the appointment of Valerie McArdle as its new head of production.

Ruth Poar, joint founder of Eat My Logo, said: "The business has grown rapidly over the past year with our fantastic production team fulfilling much larger orders including our record order of 131,500 logo branded biscuits. We felt we needed some extra high volume food production expertise in the business. Val brings many years of management experience and we are very excited to have her as a member of our team."

Eat My Logo was started in 2014 by husband and wife team, Andrew and Ruth Poar and has grown rapidly by providing baked edible promotional merchandise including logo branded cupcakes, biscuits and doughnuts.

Don't forget that BPMA members can post job vacancies on the BPMA jobs page. Go to bpma.co.uk/resources/jobs-page/ for more details.



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