

THANKYOUPPW

Industry gets behind annual awareness push



MERCHANDISE WORLD REVIEW


NETWORKING,
INNOVATION,
AND QUALITY **P16**



◀ **BPMA AWARDS**
THE WINNERS FROM
OUR BIG NIGHT **P20**

**LESSONS FROM
DUKES**
WHAT CAN BE
LEARNED? **P38**

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34

35



14

Contents

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2017

4 News

A round up of all the latest in the product media sector

7 Ignite race day

The winners and winners from Warwick

14 Ask Clive

Why not print all over the garment?

16 Merchandise World review

The rundown on the industry's must-attend show

20 BPMA awards

The highlights of the big bash at Chesford Grange

24 Promotional Products Week

The merchandise sector came out in force to back product media and raise funds to tackle Alzheimer's

28 French letter

A report on l'objet media from across la Manche

30 Bottle it

Water bottles are hugely popular, but are yours compliant?

31 British and proud

You might be surprised what a British manufacturer can do for you

32 REACH deadline

Are you ready for it?

34 17 years in leather

A report on a thriving business

35 Wireless world

The charging technology is going mainstream

37 Education

Details of the new BPMA education programme

38 Dukes demise

Who was to blame?

39 IPM COGS

Merchandise winners

40 BPMA news

All the latest news and events

42 Ten from two

Joel Benson and Dave Wilson answer the questions

WELCOME



What a couple of months it has been. The inaugural Merchandise World was a great success despite the closure of the M1 causing mayhem on the roads. I am delighted to see the reaction of the exhibitors to the January event - there really is a sense that this will be the leading

event of 2018. Merchandise World wants to focus the January event around new products, an essential driver for distributors to come to an event. Our new product awards will help shine a light on innovative new creations.

Promotional Products Week (PPW) has seen one of the biggest engagements on social media we've ever had with the Thank You campaign. The new research unveiled by the BPMA at the start of the

campaign shows some interesting insights, particularly in relation to the impact of what recipients feel when they receive a product. This data works well on infographics which many members share with their customer databases. You will have picked up a frustration that buyers feel about product quality, and this is very similar to that we saw in the 2014 research, suggesting 70% of buyers have had an unsatisfying experience when sourcing promotional merchandise, because of either product or print quality. Some of this is due to managing expectations of course - good things cost money and you get what you pay for. I genuinely feel more has to be done to promote quality products. In this respect, the BPMA's attempt to trial a niche event in central London - The Night of Luxury Brands - proved very popular. Top organisations visited the event and were keen to see only luxury products.

I couldn't leave this column without sharing the

enormity of the fall out of Dukes of London which has created a wave of concern across the industry. The BPMA is determined that there are some important learnings from this. We plan to credit check all of our members and indeed a number of non-members very soon and offer help and assistance to those that are showing poor ratings or are financially exposed. Not enough has been done on prevention, but it's also fair to say, that business owners need to take responsibility for their own risks. Our credit management programme and debt recovery service has never received such high profile as it has now and Mike Collins from Account Assyst has reviewed the Dukes case in depth in his column. The BPMA is still finalising the new industry service standard and hopes to share this soon.

Gordon Glenister,
director general of the BPMA

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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BPMA research reveals what buyers think of merchandise

A recent survey conducted by the BPMA highlighted the fact that almost 80% of people receiving a branded gift feel 'appreciated', making merchandise the most powerful advertising medium for saying thank you.

The findings underline the theme of 'Thank You' behind the industry's latest Promotional Products Week to push awareness and use of promotional merchandise. The UK promotional products market is worth close to £1bn.

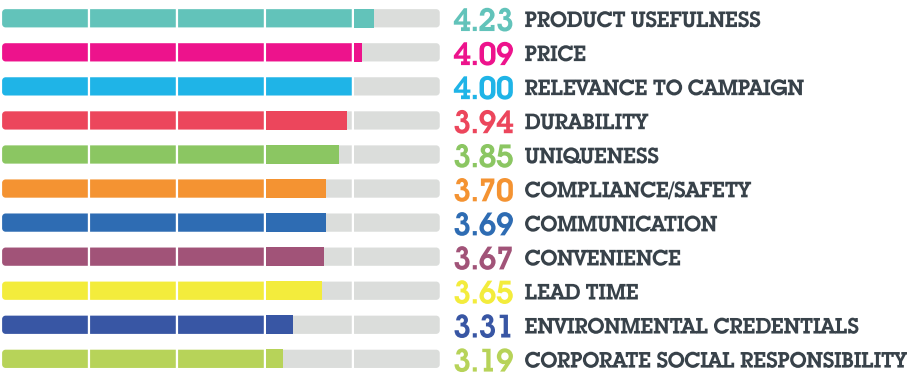
In a crowded communication marketplace, marketers, event organisers, PAs, HR managers and others are increasingly using promotional products to not only raise awareness of their brands but to thank their customers, staff and

clients. This year's PPW campaign asked people to reflect this trend by saying 'Thank You' and sharing pictures of their cool promotional products on social media with the handle #ThankYouPPW.

BPMA research, conducted this year, found that 92% of those polled have at least one branded product on their desk right now, and nearly half of those asked have more than four promotional products. The research quizzed more than 200 buyers of promotional products attending Marketing Week Live and B2B Marketing Expo events.

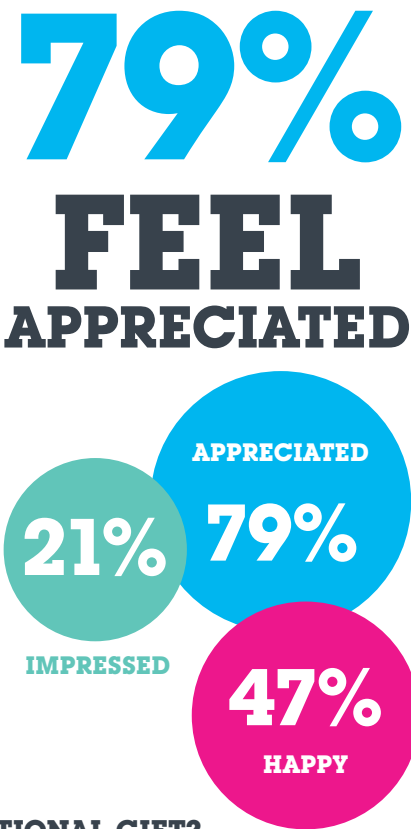
When it comes to the most popular desktop items, reliable favourites dominate the top five, which are pens, notebooks, mugs, mousemats and coasters. Asked

WHAT DO PEOPLE PRIORITISE WHEN BUYING PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS?



*Averaged score out of 5

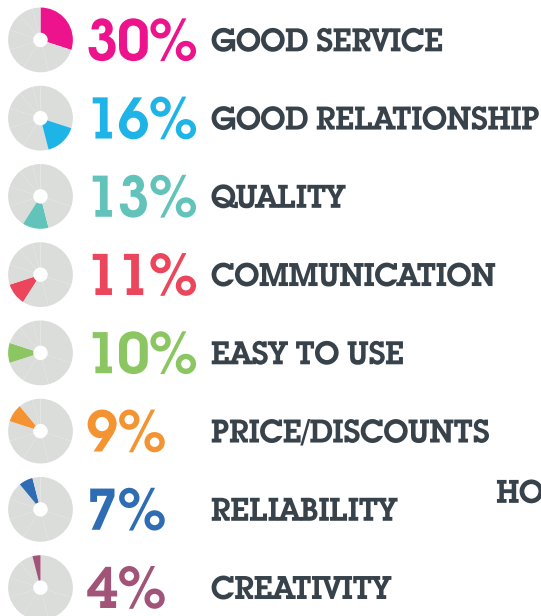
HOW DO PEOPLE FEEL WHEN RECEIVING A PROMOTIONAL GIFT?



WHAT QUALITIES MAKE THE PERFECT PROMOTIONAL GIFT?



WHY DO YOU **CONTINUE TO USE** YOUR REGULAR PROMOTIONAL MERCHANDISE SUPPLIER?



about the most effective promotional product, respondents named pens and USB sticks as the top two.

Buyers named desktop items as the promotional products that they most frequently bought, followed by clothing, electronics and confectionery.

Buyers see usefulness as the number one reason for a successful promotional product. The number one use is for trade show giveaways, accounting for 67% of the total polled. A further 52% name customer recognition as the key use for products, and 37% use them for sales incentives.

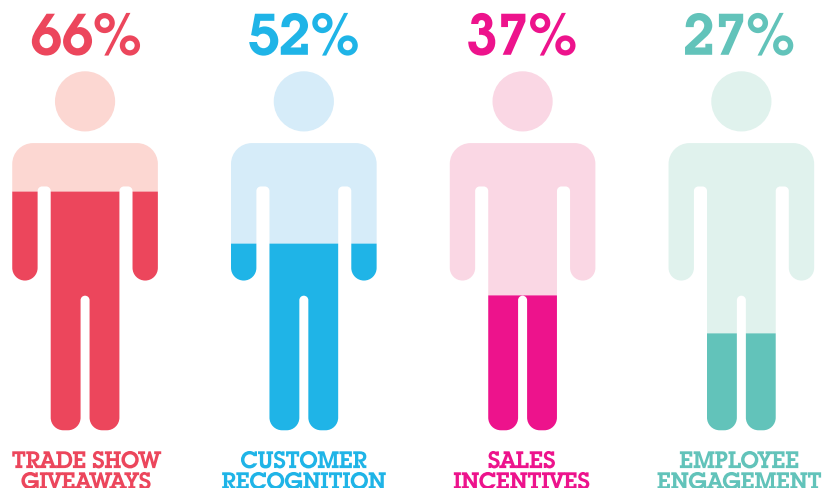
When recipients were asked for their priorities when buying promotional products, product usefulness led the way followed by price and relevance to a campaign.

The most popular use for merchandise was as trade show giveaways, with customer recognition, sales incentives, and employee engagement also registering highly.

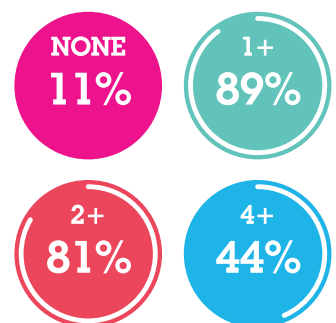
Asked about what they valued in the relationship they had with their regular promotional merchandise supplier, respondents said good service was the most important factor, followed by a good relationship, and quality. Buyers were most likely to find their suppliers through a trade show (37.4%), with Google (36.7%) and personal recommendation (25.9%) also important.

The biggest frustrations from buyers were poor quality, named by 45%, pricing (16%), lead times (12%), and lack of communication (10%).

HOW DO PEOPLE **USE** PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS?



HOW **MANY** PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS ARE ON YOUR DESK RIGHT NOW?



NEARLY HALF OF RESPONDENTS HAVE A STAGGERING 4 OR MORE PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS ON THEIR DESK

...AND THE **MOST COMMON** PROMOTIONAL ITEMS ON THOSE DESKS ARE:





Merchandise a winner at Festival of Marketing

October's Festival of Marketing was an opportunity for the merchandise community to promote the benefits of product media to a senior marketing audience, who gathered over the course of two days to listen to big name speakers from brands such as John Lewis, Marks & Spencer, The AA and Virgin.

BPMA members supplied items at the event, including Trade Lanyards, Crazy Bags, Rfid cards and umbrellas by PF Concept, and hangover packs from Bio Labs. The Festival provided exposure at a quality event that cost delegates up to £995 to attend.

Sheryana Lim, head of events at organiser Centaur Media thanked the BPMA team for their involvement. "Our branded items bear our logos and therefore we expect them to be of certain quality. As an event planner, it's always a worry

about receiving branded materials a week or even days before the event and realising they are not to spec or brief. That's why I always go with BPMA.

"The BPMA also has a stand in our Festival

City where they printed fun bespoke mugs for our guests with event related quotes. It was so popular that they completely ran out of stock by the end of first day and had to get more for the next day."



Double tops for Premier

Essex-based Premier Print and Promotions did the double at the Countywide Business Awards. As well as being awarded Employer of the Year for Essex, the company managing director, Jamie Marshall, won Business Man of the Year for Essex. It is the second time he's nabbed that prize.

The Countywide Business Awards have been established for more than 20 years and are a local platform for celebrating the very best business successes in the area.

Marshall said: "It's a huge honour to win this award, but it's definitely been a team effort. We've built an incredible team, and I am very proud of everything we have achieved together. Being recognised as Employer of the Year is the icing on the cake. This is just the beginning of great things to come from Premier."

County showcases a hit for Fluid

Fluid Branding has been spreading the word about its services, with two events recently bringing together hand-picked attendees and suppliers.

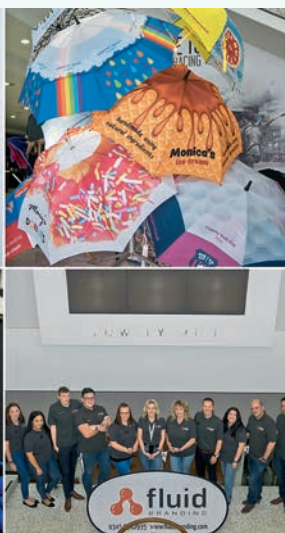
More than 40 suppliers attended Fluid Branding's annual East Anglia Merchandise Show at Newmarket Racecourse in Suffolk – its biggest yet. On the previous evening Fluid hosted its annual supplier awards dinner. The winners were:

- **Deadline Champion 2017** – The Laltex Group
- **Best Visuals 2017** – Screenworks
- **Account Manager of the Year 2017** –

David Kershner, Impression Europe

- **Personality of the Year 2017** – Emily Carpenter, Senator Pens
 - **Marketing Support of the Year 2017** – PF Concept
 - **Supplier of the Year** – PF Concept
- Fluid also held its third annual Yorkshire Merchandise Show as part of Leeds Business Week, in October.

Kyle Scott, sales director of Fluid Branding's Leeds office, said: "We were delighted with not only the numbers but the quality of the visitors. The seminars were popular again with interesting and informative content."



Ignite's racing certainty

Suppliers and distributors mixed business and pleasure at Ignite's annual race day get together

There was a record turnout of more than 100 members and suppliers at the Ignite exhibition at Warwick racecourse on 5 October.

Richard Pettinger from Ignite said "It is always a great day of mixing business and pleasure in most convivial surroundings. We are indebted to our superb suppliers who always turn out in force and with such large distributor numbers in attendance, they were kept very busy all morning."

BPMA director general, Gordon Glenister was on hand to award Applewhite the BPMA best catalogue award to Martin and Helen Applewhite who were unable to pick up the prestigious award at the recent BPMA awards dinner.

The afternoon was completed with lunch, watching the racing and the party continued into town well after dark.



VOICES FROM THE GRANDSTAND

"The Wild Thang team had a fantastic day at Warwick racecourse for our inaugural Ignite catalogue launch. It was a great opportunity to meet the supplier exhibitors who were there in force showcasing an array of new and innovative products."

Andrew Dwerryhouse, Wild Thang

"I brought along our whole team from here as we have two new girls and the suppliers were most helpful and supportive, offering advice on branding, product selection and many other things along the way. We all benefited hugely and it was a day very well spent out of the office."

Judith Tinker, M4 Promotions

"It was my first visit to the Ignite Race Day and it did not disappoint. A brilliant way to interact and network with suppliers and fellow distributors in relaxed and entertaining atmosphere."

Andy Ducksbury, Lesmar

"Many thanks for yet another fabulous Ignite Warwick event. It was great to meet so many of the group and its excellent suppliers, old and new."

Steve Waller, Swift Promotional Merchandise

"Excellent attendance by the distributor members and we look forward to developing the business with the whole of the Ignite group."

Haydn Willetts, Mid Ocean Brands.

"The morning exhibition provided an excellent opportunity for us to engage with the Ignite members in a relaxed environment, allowing for constructive conversations and product demonstrations. It was great to catch up with old friends over a lovely lunch and an afternoon of racing."

Richard Curtis, Corporate Executive Gifts



Odds on favourite

BPMA member Crystal Galleries supplied trophies for the winning owner, jockey and trainer at the Ignite Group sponsored hurdle race at Warwick. The award is a combination of an acrylic full colour top mounted on a crystal glass base, showing both elements of engraving with a full colour application.



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A TAILORED APPROACH

A changing marketplace requires a new outlook on how to best service distributors, says **Sanjay Bhalla**



Promo Trade Co was born five years ago out of the desire to service the trade. The aim was always to be innovative and provide products and services that we felt the trade needed, making it that bit easier for distributors to engage with their customers.

Our job is about aligning our business with that of the distributors and meeting their needs in an ever-evolving industry and marketplace. Things have changed more in the last 12 months than over the past few years, and that has required us to think about how we may fit into the marketplace and continue to add value.

One of our key challenges has been to be more flexible in our approach and be more targeted in how we engage with each distributor. We have been discussing with the BPMA, catalogue groups and established distributors to build our market offering to reflect a changing market.

Therefore, BPMA distributors can take advantage of specific benefits such as, additional discounts; better credit



terms; free set up and delivery, and self-promotion merchandise.

As the industry landscape changes, we will be tailoring our service, market offering and teams based on the differentiation between experienced resellers and new entrants, who cost us time and resource.

They require a different offering from our team and we have realised that we cannot have a one size fits all business.

We don't have the resources to individually vet each potential new distributor, but by working closely with the BPMA and accepting that all BPMA distributor members are professionals (following the BPMA code of practice) we intend to offer services and prices second to none.

While we accept that change is inevitable, for the sake of all involved in the change, differentiation seems to be the way that we can deliver the service and benefits each requires. PM

Sanjay Bhalla is managing director of Promo Trade

One of our key challenges has been to be more flexible in our approach and be more targeted in how we engage with each distributor

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Fighting spirit

Mo Yusuff, boss of Club Row Creations recently showed that he was also the boss of the ring when he took part in a boxing bout to raise funds after the Grenfell Tower fire. He explained his motivation and boxing background to Product Media

How long have you been an amateur boxer?

I boxed as an amateur schoolboy between the ages of nine and 11. I won the Norfolk and Suffolk ABA championships one year. Sadly, I was made to stop by my mum who didn't want to see me get hurt.

How many fights have you won and lost?

I had seven fights as a schoolboy and won five and lost two. One of the guys I lost against, I won the second time I fought him. I took up white collar boxing when a customer of ours had a charity boxing night in April.

What made you want to fight for Grenfell?

Our trainer Barry O'Connell, who was born and bred in West London, wanted to do something to help the victims of the Grenfell Tower fire, which happened on 14 June 2017. Barry and a few boxers at the club personally knew people who either died or suffered from the tragedy.

The demand to fight was huge and I was lucky enough to be chosen. I won my fight by a unanimous points decision. It was a great night with more than 1,000 people attending and we raised more than £30,000. Every penny raised will go to the victims. **PMM**





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a choice of
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**PREMIER
BRANDS.**

ASK CLIVE

Advances in printing make it easier to produce all over designs. Let your Imagination run wild, says **Clive Allcott**



Over the last few years there has been a growing market in polyester garments with full sublimation printing. The main products have always been sports driven and range from cycling tops to rugby and football shirts. However, due to changing fashion trends and the advancement of printing technology a world of creativity has been opened up.


To have a full seam-to-seam design printed, was always a difficult ask due to minimum order quantities and timescales of delivery. Times have changed! Suppliers can now offer and create unique, wearable, custom pieces of art, adorned with your logo, products of your imagination, or your brands. There is no colour limitation to restrict your design

along with the ability to print all over the entire garment.

Technically, dye sublimation printing is a full colour, full-coverage printing technique. Your artwork is printed on to a sheet of high-release paper and transferred on to your choice of apparel using heat and pressure. The dye particles convert into gas, known as sublimation, where they bond to the polyester fibres. Unlike screen printing, the dye is absorbed by the fabric for a fantastic soft feel. Once the polyester has been printed the garment is made.

T-shirts, hoodies, softshell jackets as well as a full range of sporting wear are now available from your trusted garment decorators where minimum order quantities can be as low as five pieces with a

delivery window of four weeks. Why not look for those new opportunities to grow your clothing sales?

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The afternoon starts with a Welcome Drinks reception, followed by a 3 course meal, a goody bag full of gifts kindly supplied by the event sponsors, entertainment will also be provided, alongside a Charity Raffle.

Not only is this a great way to network with industry colleagues, this is a perfect opportunity to reward and thank your staff for their hard work and to invite customers along.



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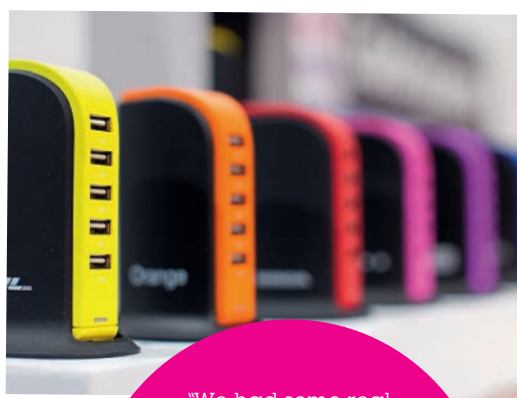


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bpma.co.uk/event/1522-the-bpma-christmas-lunch-2017

MERCHANDISE WORLD WOWS INDUSTRY

After months of planning and hard work, and plenty of anticipation from the industry, the doors opened on the newest promotional merchandise event



"We had some real quality conversations with a number of our key customers. It was a great opportunity to highlight new products and developments at this time of year. The whole event was incredibly well organised and ran very smoothly."

Christine Girven, SPS



The inaugural Merchandise World show at NAEC Stoneleigh on 19-20 September proved to be well worth the industry's wait, with more than 200 exhibitors primed and ready to show their wares, discuss business, and demonstrate their creativity to the 521 visitors to the show. Many owners and senior management from professional distributors attended the BPMA and Sourcing City show, where they enjoyed focussed and meaningful conversations with exhibitors.

More than 800 pre-booked appointments took place in the exhibition hall, with many more informal conversations and networking. Fuelled by free food and drink, and pick 'n' mix sweets from Sweet Temptations, the atmosphere was upbeat.

The show aimed to give a dynamic portrayal of the industry, with plenty going on in all areas of the exhibition. As well as the colourful stands showing the best of promotional products, the Product Branding World allowed visitors to get up close and personal with the processes of personalisation. Companies such as Listawood and Ancestors of Dover were

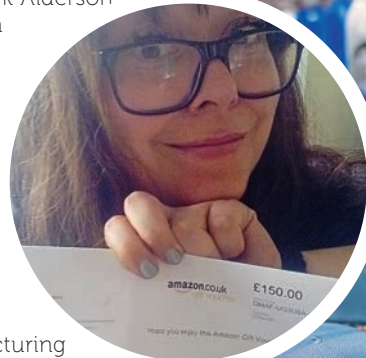
on hand to demonstrate a selection of branding methods in a live environment.

Chairman of the Briman group of British manufacturers, Mark Alderson said Branding World was a highlight, demonstrating British manufacturing techniques to distributors first hand. "It was great seeing our clients engage with the different techniques on display. The pewter casting machine demonstrated by Ancestors of Dover was a great insight into traditional British manufacturing techniques," he said.

The group ran its annual competition encouraging distributors to follow a treasure hunt around the exhibition finishing at the Briman stand. Successful distributors were rewarded with a box of British made chocolate each and the overall prize of £150 in Amazon vouchers was awarded to Naomi Scott of Reflex Marketing. (pictured above)

Looking to the future, and the talent that will fuel the industry, the World of British Innovation area featured great British-made products alongside creative promotional product ideas from design students.

Education and debate was also part of the equation, with a selection of seminars for visitors to attend and get involved

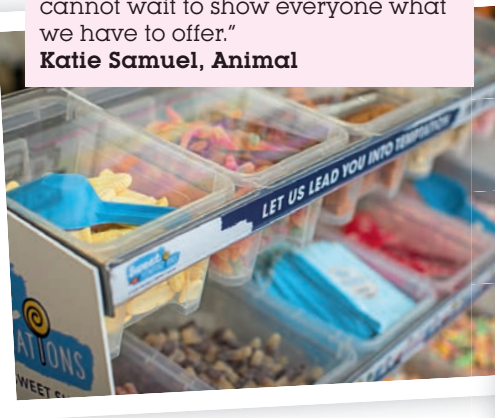


"Congratulations to the BPMA and Sourcing City for putting on a great show. The quality of the visitors and the conversations that we experienced was superb."
Andrew Langley at Juniper



"We gathered a lot of good quality contacts and leads during the two days and we are looking forward to building on these over the coming weeks. As a result of the support that we were given this time, we have booked our stand for January and cannot wait to show everyone what we have to offer."

Katie Samuel, Animal



"Merchandise World in September was perfect for the key players in the industry both on the supplier and distributor sides. A catch up in time for the Christmas and end of year run in plus the opportunity to discuss new launches or products since the start of the year."

Gary Cable, BTC Group

New product awards for MW

The industry's best promotional products will be recognised with the Promotional Product Awards at the next Merchandise World at Silverstone on 31 January and 1 February.

Platinum, Gold and Silver will be awarded in twelve categories: desk product; pocket product; executive product; edible product; novelty product; eco product; promotional pen; promotional bag; promotional clothing item; technology product; most innovative product, and best

design product of the year.

Entries are now open and close on 15 December 2017. There is an early bird discount for entries prior to 30 November. Results will be announced prior to MW at Silverstone in January to enable winners to promote their winning products before, and at Merchandise World.

More details at merchadiseworld.co.uk.



Merchandise World 2017

with. Topical debate included an Ask the Experts session chaired by Globefish Consulting's Melissa Chevin, featuring BPMA director general Gordon Glenister, BPMA chairman, Graeme Smith, Neal Beagle of Roantree, Brian Hayward of Page Partnership, and Mike Collins of Account Assyst.

The session touched on the hot topic of the demise of Dukes and how the industry could guard against similar happenings in future.


Graeme Smith said that there were no easy answers. "We pride ourselves in this industry on our openness and trust. Credit is important but trust means engaging with partners and suppliers. The shock across the industry will challenge people to think about how they engage with others. They shouldn't stop engaging, but they have to manage the process better."

Engagement was certainly the order of the day throughout the two days of the show. Kes Cracknell, managing director of Ram Branding said he had 70 meetings on the first day of the show alone.

Mick Humphries at TC Group said: "For us the format and size of the show was just perfect. We got to see all we wanted to see by a mixture of pre-planned appointments and just turning up on the day. This worked much better for us we felt it gave us more flexibility."

Colin Loughran of Goldstar-Europe added: "Having a strong peak season show is important for the UK market, and Merchandise World certainly meets that need. All the little touches like free coffee and snacks were lovely and made for a great atmosphere."

The next Merchandise World takes place at The Wing, Silverstone Circuit on 31 January and 1 February 2018. As befits a start of the year show, the onus is set to be on the latest new products from the industry's top suppliers. Many exhibitors have already taken the opportunity to book their stands at Silverstone.

Following that, Merchandise World will take place at the brand-new Farnborough International Exhibition & Conference Centre from 12 September 2018. 



"The exhibition went well for us and it was well organised, with quick and easy access. We managed to secure meetings with a select few whom we have been trying to get to see for a long time."

Malcolm Fritschy, Oldeani



"Strong format, location, attendees, business potential, with a mixture of appointments and drop ins."

Haydn Willetts, Mid Ocean Brands



"Wonderful to see a show for the trade professionals run by professionals. I hope the trade can continue to back this format."

Richard Pettinger, Ignite Incentives



"We were bowled over by the take up we had on the Branding World where we were showing laser engraving and pewter casting. This really gave us as a business an opportunity to show what we can do and how it would could benefit the industry with full customisation available."

Nicholas Humphrey-Smith, Ancestors of Dover





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WINNERS TAKE A BOW

This year's BPMA Awards were held after the first day of the Merchandise World exhibition

The BPMA annual awards dinner brought 350 industry players together at Chesford Grange Hotel to celebrate the achievements of their peers. The event also raised money for the Alzheimer's Society, the BPMA's chosen charity.

Commenting on the awards, BPMA director general, Gordon Glenister said: "I'm delighted to see such member engagement at

this annual prestigious event. I've seen the impact of what it means for the winners and finalists to be recognised for all their hard work."

Winners received their awards from industry sponsors, before the evening was brought alive by the Fabulous Fug Band who entertained the room playing classic tunes that filled the dance floor.

A big congratulation to all the winners and finalists. **PM**



Supplier of the Year up to £2m, sponsored by BTC Group

WINNER: Goldstar Europe

Finalists: Logobugs Plus Ltd, Bio Laboratories, Strive Badge



Supplier of the Year £2m+, sponsored by Brand Addition

WINNER: Bizz Badge

Finalists: The Pen Warehouse, Snap Products, SPS



Distributor of the Year up to £500k, sponsored by Promo Trade

WINNER: ASP Promotions

Finalists: Printed4you.co.uk, Neville's, Blue Mole Promotional Merchandise



Distributor of the Year up to £2m, sponsored by SPS

WINNER: Willsmer Waggs

Finalists: Everythingbranded.co.uk, Ross Promotional Products, Mojo Promotions



Distributor of the Year £2-5m, sponsored by Listawood

WINNER: Allwag Promotions

Finalists: Premier Print & Promotions, LSI, Pellacraft



Distributor of the Year £5m+, sponsored by Senator

WINNER: Fluid Branding

Finalists: Dowlis, Brand Addition, Total Merchandise



Innovative Product of the Year, sponsored by the BPMA Education Programme

WINNER: The Notebook Builder, Juniper Products

Finalists: 360-degree digital printed water bottle, First Editions; the Colour Fusion Photo Mug, Listawood



Marketing Campaign of the Year, sponsored by Marketing Week Live

WINNER: The London Merchandise Show – Fluid Branding
Finalists: OBTV - Outstanding Branding, Cunard – Arcadia



Supplier Unsung Hero of the Year Award, sponsored by Product Media Magazine

WINNER: Sarah Kirby, SPS. Collected by Josh Winstanley and Diane Anderton from SPS
Finalists: Josh Winstanley, SPS; Ryan Brown, The Umbrella Company



Personality of the Year Award, sponsored by Roantree

WINNER: Richard Pettinger
Finalists: Rob Durant, Dorian Tranter, Brian Hayward



Best Garment Decoration of the Year Award, sponsored by The Branded Clothing Group

WINNER: Screenworks
Finalists: Fanela, Creative Apparel

Catalogue Cover of the Year, sponsored by Ignite Incentives, Advantage Group, Encore and Page Partnership

WINNER: Applewhite Finalists: Roantree, LSI, Heartlands

Best stand at Merchandise World, sponsored by B2B Marketing

WINNER: Senator Pens

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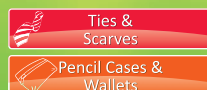
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#THANKYOUPPW

This year's PPW was the most engaging yet, spreading the message more broadly than ever and galvanising BPMA members



The promotional products sector came together for the fourth annual Promotional Products Week (PPW) from 2-6 October.

The annual event serves as a rallying point for the merchandise sector to extol the virtues of merchandise as an advertising medium, and to celebrate the best in merchandise.

This year's PPW went under the theme of 'Thank You' and was designed to show the great use that products can be put to when it comes to showing appreciation, whether that is to clients, customers, or staff.

Research by the BPMA discovered that almost 80% of people receiving a branded gift felt 'appreciated', making merchandise the most powerful advertising medium for saying thank you.

In light of this finding, the sector was encouraged to say their own thank yous to the individuals, groups, and companies that they were most grateful towards. They were encouraged to download special branded thank you signs and use them to deliver their message of gratitude by uploading pictures to social media and to the PPW website – promotionalproductsweek.co.uk – using the handle #ThankYouPPW.

This year also raised funds for the Alzheimer's Society through a range of activities by BPMA members. The BPMA asked its members, promotional buyers, and anybody who wanted to support PPW to upload their videos or photos showing a branded product, tagged with #ThankYouPPW, and to donate to the Alzheimer's Society.

BPMA members arranged and ran their own campaigns and events on the back of the Thank You campaign. The BPMA held its own unique event at the Conrad Hotel in London on 4 October. The Night of Luxury Brands aimed to inspire buyers with a range of high-end merchandise options to incentivise and reward in style (see pictures on page 40).

Outstanding Branding held its TOPS show during PPW. The event started with The Outstanding Supplier Supper on the evening of 3 October, before the main event which was held at the Tower of London. The day featured more than 30

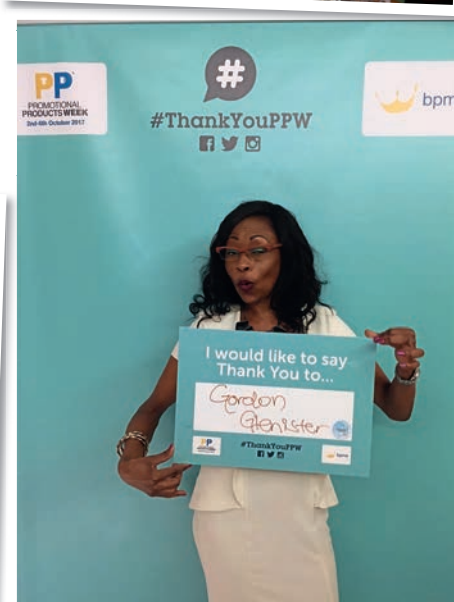
of the UK's top merchandise vendors, thousands of products on display, private tours, food, and lots of free gifts. Speakers included the BPMA's Gordon Glenister, Chris Pitt of Vertical Leap, and Alison Esse of The Storytellers.

Social engagement

With this year's focus on social media, it was heartening to see how much traffic had increased compared with 2016. The PPW account quadrupled its average impressions to 6,100 per day during the week, compared to PPW 2016 which had an average of 1,500 impressions per day. In total, there were more than 30,000 impressions for PPW 2017, compared with under 8,000 last year. The account also gained 67 followers.

The BPMA's Twitter engagement was also boosted, reaching a peak of more than 19,500 impressions per day compared to the usual average of about 3,000. There were more than 82,000 impressions throughout the week, with the top tweet gaining 1,756 impressions and 34 engagements.

In total, there were 113,000 Twitter impressions during PPW and 1,603 mentions of the #ThankYouPPW hashtag. Instagram followers increased by 51%. Media exposure also extended to other magazines with PPW featured in eight online magazines, including Promo Marketing, Printwear & Promotions, Incentive & Motivation, and Gift Focus magazine.







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VIVE L'OBJET MEDIA!

The market for promotional merchandise in France is buoyant. **Juliette Salome** explains how its trade body is building awareness of product media

According to a study by France Pub/IREP, in 2017 the French promotional market spend is around €1.25 billion. This is made up of around 150 suppliers and 2,000 distributors with up to 600 specialists who make more than 50% of their turnover from promotional objects.

Like the UK, it is a sector that sometimes goes under the radar. For this reason, 2FPCO, the French trade body for promotional products, started a national ad campaign in September 2017. In its first year it is targeting advertising agencies who often ignore or are not aware of the impact that promotional objects have.

In France, there has been a federation of advertising objects since 1911. La Fédération Française des Professionnels de la Communication par l'Objet (2FPCO) is a non-profit organisation, that was founded in 2004, bringing together the three groups of the industry: importers, distributors and makers, in different independent colleges (groups).

The Federation colleges meet about three times a year. Its summer university, open to members and non-members, took place in Nice last June, bringing together some 60 companies and 90 people. It also runs industry awards, the night of the POPs, which take place during the CTCO in Lyon, and attracts about 540 people. Local 'Apéripubs' are groups that meet for an informal drink in different cities of France, including Lyon, Strasbourg, Nantes, Marseilles, and Paris.

Having developed a charter of compliance - in addition to the professional charter - that each member must fulfil on its commercial policy choices, 2FPCO also



has an ethics committee to reduce inter-business friction.

The Federation keeps its members up-to-date, in particular on the regulatory level, through regular emails and updates on its dedicated website. Major trends we have you noticed in France include faster delivery teams and continued integration of services.

There is also a programme of conferences in schools that trains future advertisers, communicators, and salespeople. This compensates for the lack of information and training concerning advertising objects in the national education programmes. Our professional members carry out 30-35 of these training programmes per year.

Furthermore, the Federation communicates to advertisers via its 'mornings of the object' meetings concerning themes like CSR partners such

as AFNOR or SGS.

As part of the drive to build awareness of product media, 2FPCO has studied the public in France concerning the perception they have of promotional objects. It found that:

- 89% of people have a positive impression of the promotional object they have received
- 77% of people would like to receive more promotional items
- 75% remember better the brand associated with the promotional object received.

In the light of this research 2FPCO is positioning promotional objects under a new brand 'L'Objet-Media' and promoting it as a media in its own right. In the second and third year the campaign will expand and target directly the clients. 

www.2fpc.com/





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BOTTLED KNOWLEDGE

Water bottles are growing in popularity, but how compliant are yours? **Mark Oliver** outlines the requirements



The Government is currently encouraging consumers to drink more water but at the same time social media and European legislation highlights the possible risks from certain chemicals used in water bottle manufacture. In addition, as a responsible supplier, have you considered the potential choking hazards from removable small parts often found on drinks bottles which could create an additional liability on your business?

Following concerns about the possible effects of Biphenol A (BPA) used in drinks bottle manufacture, it has been banned in babies' bottles for some years and many

manufacturers promote the fact their child or adult product ranges are BPA free. We would therefore advise that you ensure your supplier or manufacturer is able to show they are aware of any health concerns and uses materials considered safe given current scientific knowledge.

In terms of product safety, Trading Standards will always assess "foreseeable risk" and as water bottles become more technical, with flip tops, pop up straws, twist spouts, and so on, and for cleaning purposes these parts are easy to remove, the chance of a child or even an adult choking greatly increases. On a water bottle that is clearly child appealing with small parts, including

the under 36-month warning would be an obvious first step.

(WARNING – Not suitable for children under 36 months. Small parts choking hazard)

However, given the likely scenario with any drinks bottle being shared, it's entirely foreseeable that any drinks bottle will be passed to children so the risk could apply to any water bottle with small parts. We would therefore advise that as best practice a pre-order sample is assessed to determine if there are any obvious hazards that could present a choking hazard, for example silicon seals and how easily they can be removed.

That ISO container of water bottles with little or

no documentation may not be such an attractive proposition after all.

The above advice is in addition to ensuring the materials used are food safe, indicated by the wineglass and fork symbol. Depending on where the bottles are being sourced, the level of checks required will vary but a first importation from outside the EU always carries most responsibility. For additional guidance please see www.businesscompanion.info/en/quick-guides/product-safety PSR

Mark Oliver is business hub manager, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards

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There are multiple benefits to working with a homegrown supplier, says **Phil Morgan**



There's a lot to be said for Great British Brands. The title alone carries an air of pride, quality and reliability; from Aston Martin and Harrods, to Fortnum & Mason.

As one of the founding members of the Briman Group, SPS, along with several other businesses, is taking great effort in communicating the benefits of buying British.

First, what does it mean to be 'Made in Britain?' The Briman Group definition is that more than 50% of a product must be made in the UK. We're not talking about the decorating side here, but the actual manufacture. So why does this matter? Let's look at some benefits.

Lead times

If you need a product quickly, and it's not something regularly held in stock, then you're a bit stuck if you're looking at importing. General shipping times



are around 16 weeks, and how many promotional campaigns are planned that far in advance? With a British manufacturer, if it's not already on the shelf, then it can be made in a short amount of time, and shipping will generally take a day once the product is complete.

Minimum order quantities

Again, buying from a British manufacturer gives you more flexibility in your order, since the products are in the UK. Instead your minimums will simply be based on efficient manufacturing, often as low as 120 pieces.

See it in real-life

We run regular 'bootcamps' in Blackpool, where distributors come on site and take a factory tour, and even try product branding – it's like watching kids in a sweet shop! Imagine that same reaction with your customers when you bring them on site to see their product being made.

Collaborative working

It can be easy to build a strong working relationship with your British manufacturers, leading to great collaborative working. Your suppliers want to help you offer the very best to your customers, and will be happy to work with you on custom ideas – helping you to wow your customers with something truly unique.

If you want to know more about British manufacturing, and the benefits it can bring, go to brimangroup.co.uk.

Phil Morgan is managing director of SPS

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PREPARING FOR REACH 2018



A looming deadline for dealing with chemicals could affect businesses. Now is the time to act, says **Melissa Chevin**

This September saw the launch of Merchandise World and with it, the first ever Business Clinic LIVE, hosted by the BPMA. During each session, the audience was given the opportunity to get answers to the questions that matter. Quality assurance and compliance topped the list of most asked questions. Audience members were keen to fully understand the impact of the latest regulations, asking questions of our expert panel, and so, in this issue, we are focusing on some of the key take-outs and important next steps.


The impending deadline of 31 May 2018 relating to REACH,

a European Union regulation concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals was at the forefront of the discussions. Rob Hinchcliffe from inspection, product testing and certification company Intertek was able to provide insight into this multifaceted area, which, given the timescale for negotiating Brexit, will still affect UK companies.

In outline, REACH is designed to ensure that chemicals on the market in the EU do not impact adversely on human health or the environment. It may affect your business if you manufacture or import in excess of one tonne of

chemical substances per year from outside the EU, either on their own or contained within a product. Under the new legislation all substances falling within that criteria will have to be registered individually. If, in 2008, you pre-registered substances within the scope of REACH that you manufacture or import at over one tonne per year, but less than 100 tonnes per year, but have not yet fully registered them, then the 2018 deadline also concerns you.

This is a complex area and now is the time to look at your supply chain, if you haven't already started, to ensure that all the appropriate

registrations are in place. If you would like to find out more information about the requirements that must be met by May 2018, the experts at Intertek have produced a white paper that gives members guidance on the scope of REACH and the steps for submitting a successful registration on time to ensure you don't put your business at risk by failure to comply. 

BPMA members can request a complimentary copy of Substance Identification for REACH: Managing Analytical Data Requirements by emailing melissa.c@bpma.co.uk.



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STAND UP FOR QUALITY

Long-term value comes from investing in products that delight customers, says **John Thorp**

I started the Leather Business 17 years ago and at that stage we were buying from an Indian manufacturer. Some 10 years ago we decided to set up our own factory in India as it gave us more control and increased opportunities.

It is frightening to think that I have been in the promotional gift industry for nearly 40 years. One of the things I've learned in this time is that higher quality products stand the test of time. If you are giving a gift you want it to be used, and used for a long time.

Cost effective advertising

I was recently asked by a fellow industry veteran if I could make him an organiser to match one he was given 30 plus years ago. He sent the original to copy - it was falling apart but he insisted that we return it as he couldn't bear to throw it away. The organiser probably cost £5 30 years ago. That's 17p per year - how about that for cost effective advertising.

Our range of leather products are functional, have a high perceived value and are long-term personal gifts. They therefore should not be sold

or marketed as a commodity. We have a range of more than 150 leather and faux leather products but have also noticed an increased trend in bespoke manufacture. As we have our own factory we can offer visuals, spec samples and full production in as little as four weeks.

Educating distributors

There is a pre-conception that the end user cannot afford a quality leather item which means that it not promoted by the distributor. Our new Prestbury Faux Leather Collection has the look and feel of a really expensive leather but the affordability of a good quality PU.

Our factory in India has grown from 6,000 sq ft with 40 employees to 25,000 sq ft and 400 employees. This year it will ship to six different countries. Our factory is an open book and we welcome anyone to visit at any time, even unannounced. We are always striving to improve all aspects of our business including our ethical and environmental performance. 

John Thorp is the managing director of the Leather Business



ALL DONE WITH WIRES

With Apple incorporating wireless charging, the technology is going mainstream, says **Matt Pluckrose**



New technology and so called 'game changing' products don't come along all that often for our industry. Looking back over the years we have seen many gadgets come and go and last for different time periods: mouse mats, modem cables, memory sticks, digital photo frames, and more recently portable power banks and charging cables. These usually see their launch as a result of a big developments or changes in consumer behaviour, or large companies such as Apple, Microsoft, or Google launching ground breaking products.

Another new product boom is just around the corner and one we need to take quick action on if we want to profit from its mass adoption. Apple finally announced its new iPhone 8 and X phones in September and confirmed they could be charged wirelessly using the global Qi standard.

Wireless charging via Qi is the transfer of electricity through electromagnetic induction fields making charging cables,



plugs and adapters obsolete. The only thing you need, is a Qi charging station (transmitter) and a phone with wireless charging capabilities (receiver). As soon as your battery runs out of power, you place the device on the station and your phone immediately starts charging.

Research has shown that up to 76% of consumers are eagerly awaiting wireless charging. Until now our market has struggled with this technology. Without Apple, offering wireless chargers and power banks to prospective clients was tricky as marketers could not know whether their

premium gift would be compatible with their clients' phones.

This has all changed and from late 2017 many business targets will have their new phones. With most other manufacturers including wireless charging, this is a now a very exciting tech area for those marketers who want to be at the cutting edge.

Wireless charging is widely available and growing rapidly with major automotive brands (Kia, BMW, Ford) including it in their cars, coffee shops (Starbucks, Costa), fast food outlets (McDonald's), and even brands such as Ikea offering wireless charging.

Now is the time to embrace the new technology, read around the subject, consult your supplier and be ready to tell the story to your clients and profit from one of the game changers. Make sure your client looks no further than your team for their next gadget promotion. **PM**

Matt Pluckrose is managing director of Desktop Ideas

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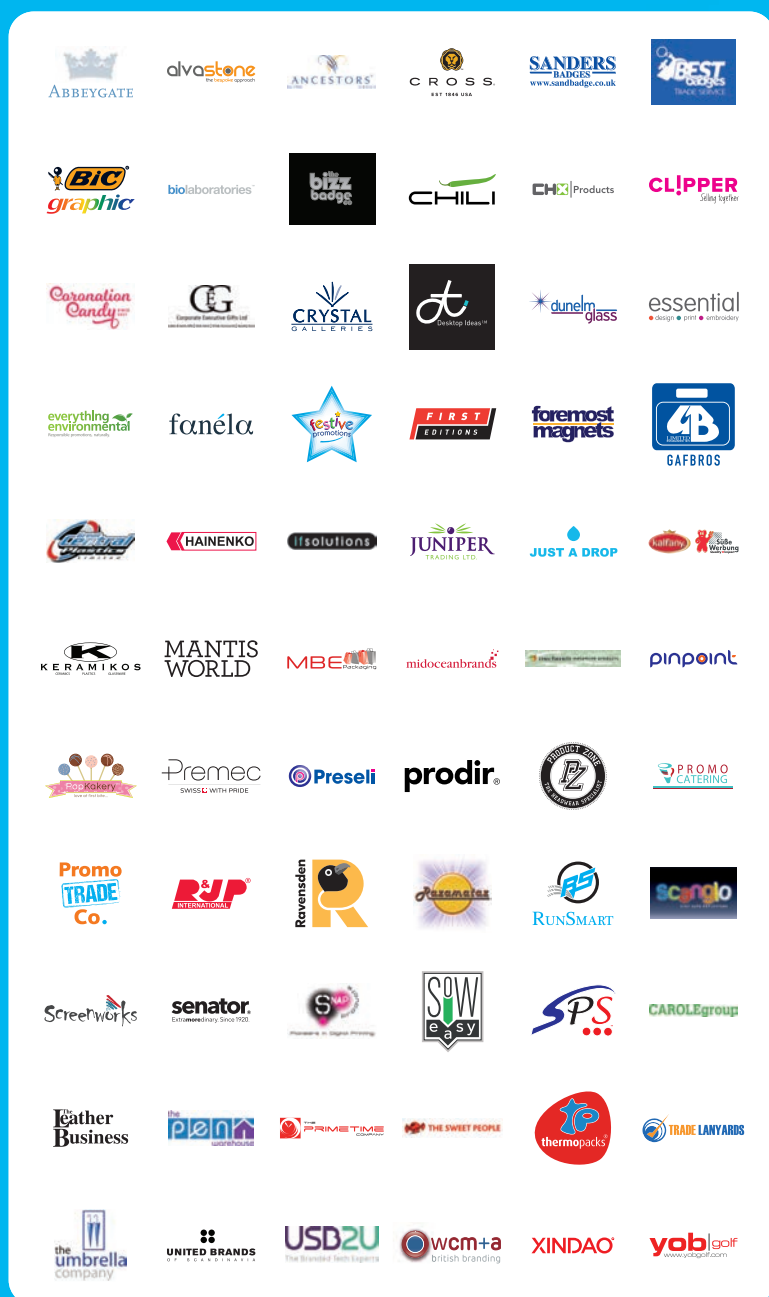
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PREPARE FOR LIFT OFF

The new BPMA education programme launches this month. **Daniela Arena** explains what to expect

Raising industry standards and best practice through education and training remains at the heart of the BPMA. It seeks to encourage industry learning and professional development to enhance skills of all individuals working in the industry. This is why I have been working on a development project behind the scenes for the BPMA for quite some time and I can't wait to share it with our members.

I have been working with a team of developers and key board directors to launch the BPMA education programme on a new platform. The project is now in its final stages and is soon to launch to the membership.

We are taking the qualities

of our previous and much-loved academy programme and current education programme to offer an even stronger learning platform and resource tool for exceptionally good value. The new online learning platform has a modern feel and offers a simple easy user experience that will help, support and prompt each learner throughout their course and annual access.

The BPMA has been working on this platform alongside building a new integrated CRM system and new website for quite some time. We have new content, more communication triggers for the learners and a manager's area so that they can log in and see the progress and activity of their team members. Anyone who is interested in

the education programme can contact me to arrange a demo.

This is the only UK promotional merchandise course, written by the industry for the industry, and it offers exceptional value for money. Many organisations place a great deal of emphasis on recruiting and the interview process to build their talent base. Unfortunately, often the investment in people stops there and with time, the business is left with a dissatisfied under-performing team.

BPMA members can develop their staff's industry skills on the Trained in Promotional Merchandise course, known as the TPM. The TPM course on the education programme includes:

- Free introductory seminar in London
- Supplier factory visits in Spring 2018
- 12 months' access to the online study platform
- Mandatory content includes an introduction to the industry, screen printing, artwork, origination and proofing, and customer service
- Access to more than 75 videos, and pdf content across 14 subject categories
- An online invigilated, timed multiple-choice question exam
- New content each year. 

For more information about the education programme and to register your interest please contact daniela@bpma.co.uk

Education Day to deliver impressive line-up

The fifth BPMA Education Day is due to take place on 30 January 2018 at Whittlebury Hall, Towcester.

Education Day 2018 brings together an impressive line-up of speakers and topics. Among the thought-provoking sessions at the event are 'Getting inside your client's head', and a great talk from the Telephone Assassin, Anthony Stears, 'No I am not interested: Understanding the importance of objection handling'.

Lee Gilbert will be sharing some great insight on the changing face of buying among Generation X and Millennials. A firm favourite is social media guru Warren Knight, who will look at how you can augment your brand 'on the move'.

To book your place today, go to bpma.co.uk.



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For more information and to sign up contact Daniela Arena, daniela@bpma.co.uk or call 0777 5938709

THE BLAME GAME

Could suppliers have foreseen the downfall of Dukes Global Limited? **Mike Collins** weighs the evidence



There's no escaping the spectacular demise of Dukes Global Limited (trading as Dukes of London). It has certainly left a significant hole in supplier cash flow and is damaging for the industry.

Fingers are being pointed and questions asked, but the most appropriate question is maybe who truly is to blame for industry supplier losses incurred?

The directors of Dukes? Did they breach any fiduciary duties in running the company? Possibly so, however the damage is done, and try proving it in legal circles.

Should Dukes staff have informed their suppliers that things were bad? In fairness, it's

unlikely that many, if any, were privy to the full financial situation.

The new USA owners perhaps? Ultimately you can't really blame any acquisition hungry company for taking up an opportunity and purchasing on favourable terms.

How about the Administrators? Were they too quick and slick in agreeing a 'pre-pack' sale? It's arguable, but the substantial unsecured creditors list definitely existed long before their involvement and the law is the law, like it or not.

Should the BPMA be accountable?

No third party, the BPMA included, can realistically tell suppliers who to deal with and who not to - it must retain



impartiality. So, if pre-packs are legal, what seriously can any trade body be expected to do?

The truth is that nobody external will ever know the true story of the demise of Dukes and equally nobody will be solely apportioned full blame. Many contributing factors led to the business failure and multiple shoulders carry varying degrees of responsibility.

One important lesson suppliers might learn, if they wish to avoid entries on future creditors lists, is that something must change. If they simply do the same as they have always done, then how can they seriously expect any different outcome? As sure as eggs are eggs, there are other distributors sailing very close to the wind and with the relative security afforded by pre-packs alongside other unsatisfactory insolvency options there is rarely any post-demise satisfaction.

The fact is that AccountAssyst had been advising clients for more than 18 months that Dukes had ZERO credit rating. Add in the recommendation that any suppliers insistent on continued dealings should do so with minimal credit limits, and preferably on pro-forma terms, then it's no coincidence that of the initially estimated £1.3 million creditors losses, only £8,596 represented subscribed AccountAssyst members.

Furthermore, suppliers

using Direct Route, the BPMA recommended zero cost debt recovery solution, had the foresight to pursue overdue invoices promptly. This resulted in many Direct Route clients being paid by Dukes in preference to other sleepier creditors, simply because they acted through an accredited third party. He who shouts loudest gets paid.

The moral of the story is that positive change needs to be implemented and embraced.

Forewarned is forearmed. Supplier companies with certain knowledge about a distributor in trouble, and not reliant on rumours, are less likely to turn up on a creditors list of £1.3 million.

A failure to plan is a plan doomed to failure. Suppliers with robust and rigid processes will inevitably have greater chances of getting paid quicker than those that simply cross their fingers and bury their head in the sand hoping it won't happen again.

So, what questions should suppliers ask themselves? Am I going to learn from this? Am I going to ensure that I become a better business by limiting future exposure and using the BPMA tools at my disposal?

The answer can only be 'yes'. So, to gain the knowledge that is real power, ring either Mike Collins or Sam Mellor on 01274 223190 to discuss your solution. **PSA**



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PRO-AD DOUBLES UP AT COGS AWARDS

Pro-Ad picked up both Gold and Silver awards in the Promotional Merchandise category, at the IPM COGS Awards 2017.

The Northumberland business won the Gold Award for its work in producing bespoke colour coated computer mice for AkzoNobel. The industrial paints company wanted to supply each member of staff with a special corporate gift for the opening of a new office in Amsterdam. The wireless mouse was coated with AkzoNobel's speciality coatings paints.

Pro-Ad added the Silver Award for its SSE Vulnerability Packs project. SSE requested 12,000 packs that would be used to support vulnerable customers that live in remote areas, in the event of a power cut during storms. Pro-Ad sourced a range of branded products and pre-packed them into boxes carrying the SSE branding.

Pro-Ad's managing director, Carlo Nardini, said: "We are delighted to have won the Gold and Silver awards at the IPM COGS Awards 2017, especially as we were competing against campaigns for popular brands with an international presence. The awards come as a great recognition of our team and their efforts in providing



BPMA director general, Gordon Glenister (left), presented Pro-Ad commercial director, Loren Nardini (centre) with both awards, accompanied by host Peter Allen (right)

our clients with the best quality of service and innovative promotional merchandise solutions."

The company added thanks to supplier, Keep Me Promotions, for its support in sourcing and completing both award-winning projects.

COGS Awards were launched by the IPM to recognise the huge contribution

made by marketing services providers to the success of promotional campaigns. The 2017 IPM COGS Awards celebration lunch was held at the St Pancras Renaissance Hotel in London. 

The two awards were presented by BPMA director General Gordon Glenister and also pictured was host Peter Allen



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Merchandise shines at Night of Luxury Brands

With gift buyers increasingly looking for higher quality products to give their clients, the BPMA arranged an evening that put high-end luxury on display.

Brands including Cross, Sheaffer, Hugo Boss, Moleskin, and Yankee Candle were exhibiting at a relaxed and classy evening that opened buyers' eyes to some of the luxury options that can be personalised as gifts.

Taking place as the industry goes into the key pre-Christmas buying period, the first event of its kind to focus solely on high-end gifts, brought together an audience of PAs, event managers, and marketers at the 5-star Conrad Hotel. PM



"I was greeted at the reception by a friendly face and a chilled glass of Lanson Champagne. There was an array of stands promoting luxury goods such as pens, wallets, leather goods, chocolates, speakers, cameras and watches to name but a few."

"Having run and organised many conferences for the British Bankers Association and now UK Finance it was refreshing to see some promotional gifts that were individual, personal and came with some thought."

Peter Sampson,
partnerships manager,
UK Finance



WCM&A raise the bar with Charter Status

After meeting the strict criteria and guidelines set by the BPMA, WCM&A has been awarded BPMA Charter Status.

Simon Adam, managing director, WCM&A said: "I want to say a huge thank you to every one of our 63 members of staff who have made this a possibility for the company. As British manufacturers of not only name badges but also a wide variety of other promotional products and an extensive

range of awards, we are incredibly proud to have gained Charter Status, awarded by the Charter Committee. Already having ISO9001, ISO14001 and Sedex accreditations, as well as our own stringent internal service level standards, systems and processes, I felt it was incredibly important for us as a company to continue to raise the bar."

"I truly believe being a BPMA Charter Supplier means a lot within the industry," added Jules Adam, business development director, WCM&A. "It is obvious from the documentation that had to be completed and proven to the Charter Committee that the BPMA themselves take the awarding

of the Charter Supplier status incredibly seriously and it will only be awarded to those who already hold themselves accountable for best practice and systems. I feel that our customers will appreciate this and be assured of our trade exclusive trading policy, quality of product, reliability and our high levels of customer service and business practice."

Gordon Glenister, director general of the BPMA said: "I was delighted to hear that WCM&A received our BPMA Charter status. This is a credit to the team at WCM&A who constantly strive to meet high standards of product quality and service." PM



Grant assistance for PSI exhibitors




BPMA members are reminded that PSI is coming up in January and that they could be liable for grants to make the process of exhibiting easier and less costly. The BPMA has a number of grants available that offer UK companies an excellent inroad into this prosperous market.

PSI is the leading exhibition for promotional goods and has been serving

the European market for more than 50 years. More than 16,000 distributors and 2,000 exhibitors descend upon Dusseldorf for the second week of January each year.

The show has had a long association with the BPMA and a UK pavilion is located within the prestigious Halle 13 section of the exhibition. This area is

well known for new companies to the German market and attracts thousands of visitors each year.

This year's PSI is on 9-11 January. For more information on getting involved, contact daniela.arena@bpma.co.uk or daniel.cordock@reedexpo.co.uk. 

BPMA CALENDAR

17 November

BPMA Member Seminar, CIPR offices, Russell Square, London

15 December

BPMA Christmas Lunch, Guoman Tower Hotel, London

2018

9-11 January

PSI, Dusseldorf

14-18 January

PPAI, Las Vegas

30 January

BPMA Education Day, Whittlebury Hall, Towcester

January 31-1 February

Merchandise World, The Wing, Silverstone

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

Ten from two



Joel Benson

Director
Hype Branding

What are you reading at the moment?

The Naked Trader – stock market trading for beginners / dummies. I have always wanted to understand this a little better

What's on your iPod?

Michael Jackson, Adele, and various house music mixes from DJs like Paul Oakenfold

What are the most important lessons you've learned in life?

Treat other people how you would like to be treated. I don't think you have to treat people badly when trying to resolve work-related issues. Always respect other people in and out of the industry

Cappuccino or Latte?

Cappuccino, although a cup of builders' tea with one sweetener is even better! Yorkshire Tea preferably

What makes you feel warm and fluffy?

When a client emails me to express gratitude for a job well done. In our industry no news is often good news – if I don't hear anything then all is well. So, I really appreciate it when a client can find the time to show appreciation for the work that we have done

Best place in the world?

Anywhere hot where I'm chilling around a pool with friends and family

If you could change one thing?

People starving in the world

How would you like to be remembered?

A great dad, a dear friend, and a fantastic boss

What are you proudest of?

What we have achieved at Hype Branding over the last six years. Starting from scratch, we have built the company with my two partners Carly Benson and Lauren Knight, and a hard-working team. I'm also proud of being a dad to my two ratbags (I mean kids!)

What's been the hardest moment of your life, and how did you get through it?

Losing my mum to Myeloma in 2012. She was only 65 and I was only 33. She was a great woman and my best friend



Dave Wilson

Managing director
Preseli

What are you reading at the moment?

To my shame, no books. My reading at present is limited to Googling TRUMP and then despairing at the madness

What's on your iPod?

Having got Spotify recently, I've decided to listen to some new (to me) music, such as Stormzy, Aurora, Moon Hooch. And podcasts: Waking Up with Sam Harris, and Kermode and Mayo

What are the most important lessons you've learned in life?

Work is important but it is not everything. Still learning it

Cappuccino or Latte

Black coffee (occasionally full cream)

What makes you feel warm and fluffy?

I'm a fan of slippers. Sexy as well as warm and fluffy

Best place in the world?

It's hard to beat the Crete villa overlooking Spinalonga with infinity pool I holidayed in a few years ago

If you could change one thing?

I'd have been good enough at football to play for Man United

How would you like to be remembered?

I would just like to be remembered. I'd settle for that

What are you proudest of?

The kids. Not the Man United youngsters, but my biological offspring

What's been the hardest moment of your life, and how did you get through it?

Between 18 and 35, I wrestled with an undiagnosed mental condition. It was a massive relief when I eventually got professional help and gained the tools to manage it. I wish I had not struggled on my own for so long

MOVES

Pen warehouse expands customer services team

The Pen Warehouse has added four staff to its customer service team as it continues to expand.

Lisa Smallpage, Mel Alevizopoulus, Vicky Clark and Hannah Wiseman join the award-winning customer services team.

Hannah said: "I'm excited to join such a friendly and hard-working team. I'm looking forward to getting to know our customers and assisting with their enquiries."

Lisa added: "I already love being part of the Pen Warehouse. It's a fantastic place to work and I'm keen to progress with the company."



Senator chalks up another quarter centenarian

Senator Pens' Mick Appleby has joined a long list of people who have celebrated their 25th work anniversary with the Harlow company.

Managing director Andrew Hill presented the facilities, resources and warehouse manager with cards, a gift from employees, and a thank you cheque from the company. He said: "Mick values the importance of Senator's ethos of working safely, efficiently and effectively, whilst at the same time creating a positive and enjoyable atmosphere for his immediate team members as well as all those he has daily contact with."





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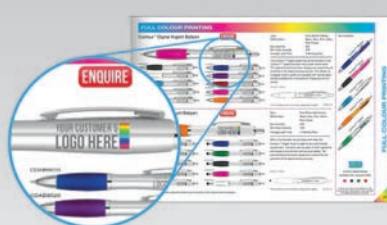


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