

17th to 20th April 2013
www.graphispag-digital.com

New print trends that generate business opportunities

Welcome to the era of "Print everything"

Decorating the living room wall with your best photo, turning your child's drawing into a 3D doll and printing the face of children on their bedroom door is possible, fast and has a reasonable cost. New technologies make it possible to produce high-quality digital printing on all types of surfaces and open up a world of opportunities: the "print whatever you want, wherever you want" business is taking off. Limitless personalisation has arrived.

They do not want the same as everyone else. They hate to feel like a number. They like to decide and personalise their clothes, their home, their car... and feel unique. They are the consumers of the 21st century: more connected, more informed, more aware and more demanding. Adapting to their new demands, such as product personalisation, is the challenge of and, at the same time, the opportunity for the graphic communication sector, which will meet up from April 17th to 20th in Fira de Barcelona's graphispag.digital. The trade fair will be an authentic showcase with the latest in digital graphic technology, new graphic products and innovative finishes and substrates; everything to satisfy a new client who demands quality, price and unlimited personalisation.

The re-evolution of graphic communication

Printing on a door, a table or shower tiles was unthinkable a few years ago. However, today, thanks to the latest advances in digital printing and its great versatility in use of materials, almost everything is possible.



The interior design studio Egue & Seta and the digital printing centre Sabaté, with 70 years history in the sector, demonstrated this in the last edition of Casa Decor with "Print Avenue". It is a unique space where Sabaté has been commissioned to print Egue & Seta's exclusive designs on metal, methacrylate, wood, fabrics and carpet. The result is spectacular and proves that almost everything imaginable is possible. For **Daniel Pérez** (Egue & Seta), "digital printing is suggesting to interior designers a whole new field of formal exploration and the possibility of

offering a stunning solution at an interesting price". This price reduction has been a key factor according to César Díaz, sales and production manager of Sabaté: "Years before, the graphic applications we carried out were basically for trade fairs and exhibitions. Today, interior designers, architects and window dressers have become big consumers of our product ". Therefore, Sabaté has clearly opted for 3D graphics, offering clients the possibility of personalising elements that, until now, had not been considered (chairs, tables, shelves...), and using recyclable substrates.



Clorofiladigital, with 30 years in the sector, is another firm that has joined this trend. With the slogan "With us, your imagination has no limits", the company offers personalised solutions to architects, interior designers, museographers, stage designers and individuals. **José Luís Cano**, the manager, ensures us that *"technology has opened up great artistic possibilities because of its application on*

multiple substrates" and *"clients bring us great creativity of which we try to take advantage"*. It is easy to see on their website that there are, effectively, no limits to the imagination: washing machines with the New York skyline; headboards with the photo of Marilyn; walls that envelop you in an almost real autumnal landscape or floors with the city's metro map.

Others, such as Pixartprinting, allow you to design your own armchair online, they print it for you and they deliver it to your home in a couple of days at a modest price. The examples are limitless and some are very original, such as Crayon Creatures, which print 3D children's drawings, giving "three dimensional" life to suns, giraffes, children and little houses drawn by kids.

Textile digital printing grows exponentially

One of the digitally printable substrates that has grown notably in recent years is textile; and it is not only large companies that are taking advantage of the possibilities, but small start-up firms have managed to turn them into business opportunities. This is the case of stikets.com, a small company from Igualada that prints personalised labels. The idea came from **Maria José Rivas** and **Stephanie Marko**, two enterprising mothers who saw the need to find an easy, long-lasting solution to identify their children's clothes. For Marko, *"it is evident that there is a market where clients and companies want personalised and competitive products in small quantities"*.

Another start-up that is growing thanks to digital textile printing is La Fibra Creativa, founded by **France Buyle**. Through her website, this patchwork enthusiast offers to print photos, drawings and exclusive designs on silk, cotton and linen scarves with no minimum quantity required. Buyle is convinced that "part of silk screen printing production will gradually become digital because of its flexibility" and "part of local textile manufacturing, which disappeared decades ago, will be recovered". These are optimistic forecasts, like those of the consultancy firm **Pira Internacional** and **FESPA** (formerly the Federation of European Screen Printers Associations) that, in a recent study, foresaw an increase of over 870% in digital textile printing between 2009 and 2014.

It is therefore evident that the printing industry is undergoing a deep reconversion but it is also clear that, with the latest advances in digital technology, a whole world of opportunities to print everything we could imagine is opening up. **Rafael Farrés**, President of graphispag.digital 2013, concluded: "it is essential to pay attention to changes in demand. It is crucial to understand this and see how we have to adapt our product, within the company's real possibilities". Some are already taking advantage of the demand for limitless personalisation.

The pleasure of personalisation

Why do we like designing our trainers and online business cards or getting our favourite photo printed on the living room wall? What is behind the personalisation boom? Marc Cortés, Professor of Marketing at ESADE, says "having a personalised product or service makes us feel different and unique". Moreover, he adds "Having a tailor-made product increases the perception of a good service. This guarantees more "pleasure" in use and, therefore, more bond with the brand".

A recent Accenture study corroborates this boom: 63% of consumers wish to be able to personalise the products or services they receive for them to be exactly what they want. According to Cortés, it is a change in consumer behaviour reinforced by efficiency: "production processes allow us to personalise products at a more affordable cost" and, moreover, "digitalisation allows us easier, faster and cheaper access to these processes".

In the face of these changes, Cortés recommends companies in the printing sector to observe their clients. "Only those who understand the transformation from the client's viewpoint and not from the sector's perspective and those who work on developing services and not products will survive", he warns.

Printing photos to give as mementos

We accumulate thousands of digital photos on our smartphone, laptop, social networks... But, how many do we print? Although traditional printing on paper has been freefalling for years, other forms of giving physical life to our photos and give as mementos are growing in strength. Hofmann, Fotoprix, Kodak and Fann are just some of the companies that offer thousands of possibilities on their websites: photo albums, mugs, canvasses, calendars, posters, bags and even mobile casings. According to HP, this market is growing in strength all over Europe and, in 2015, will generate over 780 M€. This business can be found more and more on the Internet. According to InfoTrends, in 2013 75% of photographic products will be bought online.

Author:

Natàlia Torrent for graphispag.digital

*The contents of this article can be reproduced totally or partially.
If reproduced, graphispag.digital should be quoted as the source.*