A bulletin from the world of global media distribution

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STRATEGY / Environment / Global

Striving for sustainability

Sustainability is the topic that will continue to dictate business strategies for the foreseeable future, and this trend has only picked up pace since the DistriPress Zurich panel on the topic six months ago.
Sarah Lesting, Sustainable Solutions Consultant at recycled paper manufacturer Leipa and one of of panelists in Zurich, says they have changed the way they communicate their products due to this shift.

“As a supplier, we have changed our outlook. In the past, we supplied products and they just happened to be recycled, that was a small point,” says Lesting. “Now, we’re really communicating that it’s 100% recycled as our main point, and benefits like environmental savings.

“Customers were not conscious about production in the past, they just wanted paper. Whereas today, they’re actually quite curious and inquisitive.”

There have been numerous innovations in recent years, meaning that publishers can now opt for high quality finishes and still remain recyclable and sustainable.
Markus Vögeli, CEO of printer Vögeli AG, says: “We are focusing on developing our self-adhesive paper and are looking for transparent paper or foils that are safe to recycle. We are right in front of a breakthrough to find the yarn for bookbinding - that was previously a problem until now, but we have found a solution.”

Reducing contaminants
However, there are still materials that are difficult to recycle, including some inks, paper that is laminated or has glue on it, such as kids magazines with toys attached. Lesting calls these elements “contaminants”.

“From a recycling point of view, we’re focused on removing contaminants. Ink is one problem in terms of how it’s manufactured; if it can go into a paper recycler or if it ends up in landfill, that it doesn’t have a detrimental effect. But actually, the first priority for me is reducing contaminants like foils.”
Having glitter on a product or a varnish finish, which makes it hard to remove the ink, can make paper difficult to recycle. Children’s toys on the front of magazines can also be a consideration when it comes to recycling.

Products like this do not necessarily end up in landfill at Leipa as a “last resort”, they are burned for energy which powers the paper manufacturer.

Lesting is also noticing more and more welcome innovation. There are solutions which allow publishers to give free gifts without contaminants appearing in the cycle, such as the November 2021 issue of Elle Poland where they included a free tote bag inside a fully recycled cardboard box, just big enough for the gift and the magazine.

**The importance of certification**
As a Cradle to Cradle certified printer, Vögeli has strict rules about which inks and materials they use when printing.

“Cradle to Cradle is a certification which proves that the products are safe for the biological cycle, and for this, we only use paper, inks or glues that have substances that are safe for biological cycles and without any harmful substances,” says Vögeli.

As the ingredients of the inks are top secret, it makes certification even more crucial when choosing suppliers. But, sustainability within the supply chain is increasing, says Vögeli.

“It’s going to make a steep curve where more will be working on their sustainability than not. We are not far away from that tipping point where the curve really starts to grow,” he says.

Lesting says there are some people who will miss out on business because they are too late to adapt.
“Those first people to work on their sustainability were pioneers, and then you get the people who will do it because it’s a cost advantage. Finally, you get the people who will be unsuccessful because they will be too late to make the changes.”

Collaboration is key
But, to ensure as much progress as possible within the industry, Lesting and Vögeli agree that the industry needs to work together to push innovation.

For Vögeli, this means working with two other printers to develop new products.

“We are not collaborating to gain new business or new customers,” says Vögeli. “We are collaborating to develop sustainability. This is open to all printers to join because within the collaboration we can share knowledge and the costs of developing new materials and solutions.”

At Leipa, Lesting says collaboration could make the supply chain more efficient and in turn help drive sustainability forward. This could be proposing that when they deliver paper to a client, that the client then sells their waste paper back to Leipa, and preferably, that a single trip can transport the new product there and the waste product back.

“Anyone who produces waste - including publishers, distributors and printers - should think about what is the best solution for their waste,” says Lesting.

“Commercial viability must still be considered, but there are other benefits that will add value in your chain.”
Fifteen years of Monocle

“It’s 15 years since the first boxes of magazines arrived at the offices of Monocle and our plucky new title began heading off to newsstands around the globe and our launch subscribers, many of whom are still with us all these years later.

“That moment – February 2007 – was seen as a daring time to start a magazine, with many already chanting that now-weary phrase, “print is dead”. Monocle also seemed to be creating its own newsstand category: where should a journal that covered global news, business, design and fashion even sit on
newsagents’ shelves? In the early days we included a sheet of paper with the bundles of magazines to show exactly where to put us. But a few things went in Monocle’s favour.

“In many ways, the global financial crash of 2008 actually helped Monocle thrive. It gave us a sense of purpose as never before. As other news titles filled their pages with gloomy narratives, Monocle went to places that were still flourishing. It focused less on flash and more on design and fashion brands making products with craft and durability at their core.

“Cut to Monocle’s offices in Marylebone, London, 2022. It’s a Monday morning and the first boxes of the 15th anniversary issue have just arrived. There’s still that same excitement as the boxes are torn open and issues handed around to the team.

“Much has changed in the world since 2007, but the founding ideals of Monocle still hold true: celebrate print, tell stories in the best way you can, and be optimistic. It’s why Monocle is enjoying this moment of celebration but also looking forwards – determined to keep an eye and an ear on the world.”

Andrew Tuck, Editor-in-chief
Welcome, Giselle Ho

The publishing world needs connection to thrive, according to new DistriPress Community Manager, Giselle Ho. Building a global community of publishers, distributors and industry service providers is the ‘essence’ of the role she’s taken on.

“I’m so happy to have the loyalty and support of DistriPress members,” says Giselle. “I am looking forward to taking it to the next level, including building new connections through social media and expanding our network further.”

Giselle’s career started off at the Marriott International Hospitality Group, but she later moved to the New York Times, assisting the circulation director with distribution and sales. In
a couple of years’ time, she was promoted to Director of Business Development overseeing print and digital businesses for the Asia Pacific.

“I had no background in circulation when I moved there,” says Giselle, but it wasn’t too long before she was making her mark at the company - including creating a brand new channel that brought in $100,000 in 12 months.

“It’s one of the key things I’m proud of at the New York Times,” she says. “By developing event partnerships, I was able to generate additional revenue, better engagement, and increase the loyalty of their customers.”

Now, in her role at DistriPress, she hopes to bring this knowledge and experience to build closer connections throughout the community.

“We’re reaching out to a wider network of new publishers, distributors and service providers for instance those involved in subscription fulfilment, AI, and also products aligned to DistriPress members’ interests”

“One of the benefits of being a DistriPress member is having access to the Congress, and I’m looking forward to meeting members in person in Estoril this year” she says. “It's not just about one event but ensuring we have year-round engagement and support for our members.”

“So if you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to drop me an email at giselle.ho@distripress.org”
A biannual magazine looking at modern motherhood, Mother Tongue has launched. The title includes stories about sex, politics, art, pop culture and food. While it’s a magazine aimed at mothers, it’s not about kids or how to parent them. It’s about women and the lives they live as mothers.

https://www.mothertonguemagazine.com/

New afrocentric lifestyle title launched
New magazine Bavual – named after a popular name in many parts of Africa – has been launched as “a forceful and and clear reteller of history from the Afrocentric viewpoint,” according to editor and publisher Earl A. Birkett. He describes his ‘fictional muse’ as “a perpetual 25-year-old from Tanzania, but who could live anywhere on Earth.”

https://bavual.com/

ACERO targets Spain’s young creatives
Metal has launched a new magazine, ACERO, to cater to the young, urban creative market in Spain. Covering music, fashion, cinema and art, it aims to give the next generation of photographers, stylists, creative directors, hairdressers and makeup artists a platform.


Silver goes to print
Silver magazine has launched its first print issue. The magazine, which is aimed at people between the ages of 45 and 75, has had an online presence for over five years before launching a physical issue. The launch was originally intended for Spring 2020, but with the Covid-19 pandemic everything was postponed. However, after hanging on by ‘the skin of our teeth’, the magazine is now finally out in the world.

https://silvermagazine.co.uk/

Planning the perfect divorce

Divorcing Well magazine launched on Valentine’s Day, published by Southern California Life publisher and president Monique Reidy. The magazine strives to focus on helping divorced individuals live well, covering wellbeing, physical health and good financial management. "Being single and happy in one’s own skin is a celebration regardless of romantic attachment," Reidy told Samir ‘Mr Magazine’ Husni. “The magazine underscores the importance of self-care and self-worth and that it doesn’t take another human to make one feel worthwhile.”

SAVE THE DATE

DistriPress Virtual Forum 11 May 2022

Save the date in your calendars and look out for registration details soon.
INSIGHT / Growth / Indonesia

Innovating through uncertainty

The Indonesian publishing market has been striving for international recognition for a number of years.

The country, which is the largest publishing market in Southeast Asia, was named Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2015, and subsequently the market focus at the 2019 London Book Fair. Most recently, Indonesia’s capital Jakarta was named a City of Literature by UNESCO in November.

In 2019, total revenues of the Indonesian publishing market were $1.5bn, with a compound annual growth rate of 6.4% between 2015 and 2019.

Books were the largest section of the market in 2019, with total revenues of $0.8bn and around 114,845 new titles in the year, across 5,748 publishers.

There has also been a huge shift from retail to e-commerce, with the biggest bookstore chain in Indonesia, Gramedia,
recording a 289% increase in e-commerce sales from 2019 to 2020.

However, like many countries, the Covid-19 pandemic has hit the sector hard, with the majority of publishers seeing sales decline by over 50% compared to normal times.

Many publishers stopped production over this period. 17,000 Islands of Imagination Foundation, a non-profit organisation working to improve the quality of literature and content in Indonesia, warned that this could see closures across the industry.

Despite this, experts say there is innovation happening - both in terms of showcasing content and marketing products, with book to film, book to podcast and book to animation being popular digital formats.

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