



Print Matters for the Future conference unites industry in Riga

The event served as a platform for industry leaders to address the challenges faced by the printing industry and discuss its future prospects.

The Print Matters for the Future conference, jointly organized by Intergraf and NOPA on June 9, 2023, in Riga, Latvia, brought together approximately 120 industry professionals from 22 countries and two continents. The speaker lineup included a diverse group of industry representatives, printers, graphic designers, media specialists, association professionals and researchers in the field.

Representatives from national printing associations, printers, suppliers, and high-level speakers from Europe and North America gathered to exchange insights, strategies, and to collaborate on pressing industry issues. The conference emphasized sustainability, emerging trends, and technologies while showcasing the industry's resilience.

Speakers highlighted that inkjet technology is expected to grow in the printing industry, but offset printing will remain resilient, particularly for large-volume printing. Some experts highlighted that the digital sector aims to achieve decarbonization through renewable energy utilization, supported by public subsidies. The printing industry should prioritize

decarbonization initiatives to align with other industries. The US colleagues added that sustainability is a greater concern for printers in Europe compared to the United States, however, the interest towards environmental schemes started growing across the pond as well.

The event emphasized that external factors such as environmental regulations, labour laws, anti-print campaigns, and emerging digital competitors shape the printing industry, necessitating strategic adaptation.

Experts on emerging technologies and media specified that the graphic industry is undergoing a revolutionary transformation with the introduction of AI, automating processes, and enhancing functionality, though concerns arise about the future of traditional jobs. They maintained that print service providers need to embrace reinvention and transform their business models to remain relevant in the evolving industry landscape.

The next Print Matters for the Future will take place on June 14, 2024, in Bucharest, Romania. More info about the event is available [here](#).



Study: printed mail outshines digital display in commercial effectiveness

JICMAIL has recently unveiled the findings of its year-long study called "The Time We Spend With Mail" which provides insights into the amount of time consumers spend engaging with their mail.

The study involved measuring the time consumers spend with various types of mail, including Direct Mail, Door Drops, Business Mail, and Partially Addressed Mail. JICMAIL utilized a panel of 1,000 households per month to capture time-spent metrics, while also collaborating with Lifestream, an AI-driven video analytics company, and PwC, a leading professional services firm, to validate and analyze the data.

One of the key findings of the study is that mail is a high-attention media channel. On average, a Direct Mail item captures 108 seconds of attention over a 28-day period, Business Mail receives 150 seconds, Partially Addressed Mail captures 64 seconds, and Door Drops are viewed for 46 seconds.

The accuracy of these time-spent figures was confirmed through an in-home video analytics exercise. The exercise involved panellists reporting the time they spend with mail in their homes, which aligned closely with the data reported by the JICMAIL panel.

The study also established a strong link between mail attention and commercial effectiveness. Direct Mail items that are deemed commercially effective generate two to three times more attention, while Door Drops have a multiplier of three to five. Commercially effective mail has proven to drive various consumer actions, including purchases, footfall, discussions, and voucher

redemptions. Furthermore, mail generates a substantial amount of digital attention for brands' owned channels, with the average mail item prompting five minutes of website visits per session.

The location within the home and contextual relevance play significant roles in driving mail attention. The Living Room and Kitchen are particularly high mail attention environments, with specific types of mail found in each. For example, charity, medical, and government mail are often found in the Living Room, while retail and restaurant mail are commonly found in the Kitchen.

When compared to other media channels, mail attention stands out as highly efficient. PwC's review of the methodology revealed that it costs only £0.07 to generate a minute of consumer attention with Door Drops, and £0.11 for Direct Mail. This makes mail more attention efficient than social display, digital display, and TV advertising.



European Commission supports the use of euro banknotes

The European Commission put forward a proposal to ensure that citizens and businesses can continue to access and pay with euro banknotes and coins across the euro area.

The main objective of the proposal is to safeguard euro cash as a means of payment so that people will continue to be able to use it for their payments if they so wish. Indeed, although the use of cash has declined, the 2022 ECB SPACE study confirms that it still represents 59% of the number of retail payment transactions and 42% of the value of these transactions. Additionally, 60% of European consumers consider it important to keep the option to pay by cash. The full name of the legislative proposal is "Proposal for a Regulation of the

European Parliament and of the Council on the legal tender of euro banknotes and coins", the full text of the legislation is available [here](#). Intergraf welcomes the proposal as it shows that printed banknotes continue to play a major role for citizens.

The proposal will also set out a framework for a possible new digital form of the euro as a complement to cash.

The initiative will now be discussed in the European Parliament and in the Council of the European Union before its final adoption.

European Parliament deadlocks the proposed Nature Restoration Law

The latest version of the proposed Nature Restoration Law by the European Commission failed to secure a majority vote in the Environment committee.

The rejection occurred due to concerns raised by the centre-right European People's Party, which criticized the bill for its potential impact on the agricultural industry. Contentions centred around disruptions in supply chains and a potential long-term increase in food prices. Left-inclining parties, advocating for renewable energy and environmental rehabilitation, contested these claims but failed to secure a majority. The law aimed to protect 20% of the EU's land and sea initially, with proposed amendments to raise the threshold to 30%. It requires governments to develop strategies for biodiversity restoration. The rejection will be brought to the European Parliament plenary for further discussions and decisions.

According to the Commission, the [Nature Restoration Law](#) is designed to restore damaged ecosystems and reduce pesticide use, as well as safeguard food supply resilience, protect the environment, and promote human health.

The Committee will table to plenary the proposal to reject the Commission's proposal. The European Parliament as a whole is then required to take a position, probably in the July plenary session in Strasbourg pending approval of the agenda by the Conference of Presidents. Intergraf is closely following the latest developments surrounding the proposed Nature Restoration Law, as it will directly impact the paper industry operations.





Doordrops remain valued and effective, studies show

While there are continuous attempts in certain countries or localities to reverse the system to receive doordrops (from opt-out to opt-in stickers), studies continue to demonstrate that doordrops are efficient and valued.

The Door Drop Report 2023 by Data & Marketing Association (DMA) [unveiled](#) that annual expenditure on door drops remained steady at £181.2m, barely changing from £182.3m in 2021. Despite a difficult advertising market, volumes held up well at 3.53 billion. Issues like paper availability and rising production costs due to the energy crisis impacted the sector. However, the door drop channel demonstrated efficiency and effectiveness, reaching 1.05 people per household and 3.1 interactions per month. Younger audiences showed increased engagement, while sectors like supermarkets, retail, tradespersons, and charities sustained volumes. The report emphasizes the flexibility and effectiveness of door drops in a digital-dominated era.

Younger audiences continue to present additional targeting opportunities for advertisers in the mail channel, the research also found. While all age groups measured have seen their door drop engagement increase since 2018, the under-35 category has overtaken the other two age cohorts and – despite those aged 55+ narrowing the gap during 2022 – they remain the most engaged age group overall.

Roughly the same amount of sectors have seen volumes increase this year compared to last year, with some larger sectors experiencing modest double-digit growth (e.g. supermarkets were around +10%) and others with smaller increases, but the DMA said there was plenty of opportunity to grow volumes (e.g. for local and national tradespersons).

Another report by IFH Cologne [shows](#) that living sustainably is becoming an important criterion in the daily consumption routine for an increasing number of consumers. This study has examined the sustainability, usage, and reception methods of door drops.

For most consumers, sustainability and paper brochures do not go hand in hand: Around two-thirds believe that paper production consumes excessive amounts of water, 42% mention environmental pollution, and one-third of respondents argue for replacing printed brochures with digital ones. These beliefs primarily stem from a lack of awareness about paper production. However, when respondents are informed about water and CO2 consumption – 93% of water used in the paper industry is cleaned and recycled, while the CO2 emissions of digital products continue to rise due to growing digital infrastructure – their opinion changes significantly. After receiving brief information, only 29% of respondents still perceive excessive resource consumption and environmental pollution, and the advocates of purely digital brochure advertising decrease to 25%. Especially in the 18 to 25 age group, many individuals deviate from their belief in digital alternatives after being informed. Over 90% of consumers use print brochures, and 64% of consumers consciously use print brochures for food to save money during times of inflation. The readership rate is particularly high in households with children (70%) and among single parents (78%).



Packaging: plastic or paper?

The proposed Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) is currently being discussed in the European Parliament and Council. The discussions are crystallising around the single use versus reuse. The plastic packaging value chain considers that “thanks to their versatility and durability, plastics provide potential for supporting reuse and refill systems in different applications”. The fibre-based packaging industry is presenting studies aiming at demonstrating that “reusable solutions would yield higher CO2 emissions” and that single-use paper packaging have a better environmental performance from an LCA perspective.

A [study](#) commissioned by McDonald's cautions that the transition from single-use recyclable packaging to reusables in the informal eating-out sector could have adverse consequences for the environment, economy, and food safety. PPWR sets targets for the increased utilization of reusable packaging in takeaway consumption: 10% by 2030 and 40% by 2040. However, the study conducted by Kearney for McDonald's reveals that this shift is likely to result in a significant increase in plastic waste to replace the current paper bags, wrappers, and pizza boxes used in takeaway establishments and small eateries.

According to Kearney, that total plastic packaging waste for dine-in consumption could surge by up to 300%, while takeaway consumption may witness a staggering rise of over 1,500% in plastic packaging waste. Moreover, the use of reusable packaging for dine-in purposes would require substantial amounts of water for washing—approximately 1 to 4 billion liters—posing new challenges in terms of hygiene and food safety.

Furthermore, the study suggests that the transition to reusables would lead to additional greenhouse gas emissions due to the production of new plastic items and the energy required for washing the reusable packaging. The estimated increase in emissions is projected to be up to 50% for dine-in and as high as 260% for take-away services.

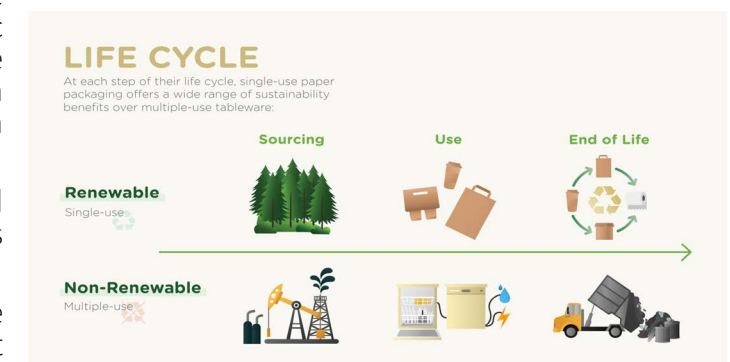
In the meantime, a recent [study](#) conducted by Ramboll found that single-use systems outperformed reusable options in six categories.

According to the updated report, reusable tableware generates 2.8 times more CO2-equivalent emissions, consumes 3.4 times more freshwater, produces 2.2 times more fine particulate matter,

and increases fossil and metal resource depletion by 3.4 times. Additionally, it leads to 1.7 times more terrestrial acidification.

In a broader perspective, if the multi-use system analyzed in the study were implemented across Europe, its environmental impact would be equivalent to adding one million petrol cars on European roads annually and would require the freshwater resources of a city with a population of 750,000 people. Given the growing water stress and the urgent need for carbon emission reduction, choosing environmentally friendly options becomes crucial.

The study also highlighted the recyclability of single-use paper-based food packaging, distinguishing it from polypropylene, glass, metal, and ceramic multi-use systems. Single-use paper-based items can be fully recycled, offering a key advantage. Moreover, the benefits of single-use packaging increase significantly with higher recycling rates in restaurants. For instance, increasing the recycling rate of paper-based items from 30% to 70% amplifies the advantage of paper items in freshwater consumption from 3.4 to 228 times.





Plastic or paper: what do people think?

Some studies suggest that consumers embrace paper-based packaging for environmental benefits.

The 'Trend Tracker Survey 2023' conducted by Two Sides Europe explores changing consumer perceptions towards print, paper, paper-based packaging, and tissue products. With over 10,000 consumers surveyed in 16 countries worldwide, the document reveals a growing belief among consumers that paper-based packaging is better for the environment than other materials.

Packaging plays a crucial role in purchasing decisions by providing product information and ensuring product quality. The survey revealed that out of 15 attributes, paper/cardboard was the favourite for 10. Paper/cardboard was positioned best for environmental factors like home compostable (76%), better for the environment (55%) and easier to recycle (49%). Consumers are correct to believe that paper is easier to recycle. In Europe, 82% of paper packaging is recycled, the highest recycling rate of any packaging material. Glass has a recycling rate of 76%, metal 76% and plastic just 38%.

In the US specifically, half of the respondents [said](#) paper/cardboard is better for the environment than other types of packaging. Consumers also preferred paper/cardboard packaging for being home compostable (59%) and easier to recycle (43%). This data comes amid the fact that sustainability is a greater concern for printers in Europe compared to the United States.

Regarding shopping bags, consumers perceive paper bags as highly compostable, recyclable, and made with renewable materials. The survey highlights a shift in consumer thinking about responsibility for reducing non-recyclable packaging. While individuals were previously seen as the most responsible, consumers now believe that governments and local authorities should take the lead in minimizing non-recyclable packaging. Nonetheless, there is still an acknowledgement of individual responsibility. Consumers expect governments, brands, and retailers to prioritize recyclability and sustainability in packaging, reflecting their awareness of packaging's environmental impact.

4evergreen releases second version of its Circularity by Design guideline

This new addition to the package, which already includes the Recyclability Assessment Protocol and Guidelines for Enhancing the Collection and Sorting of Fiber-based Packaging for Recycling, shifts its focus to used beverage containers (UBC) and similar packaging.



Its objective is to furnish manufacturers with an industry-endorsed resource to facilitate the design of such packaging for optimal recyclability. By doing so, it aids the packaging sector in prolonging the utilization of fibre-based materials within the production cycle.

The recommendations were formulated following extensive research and consultations led by experts over the course of several months. Their scope encompasses various types of fibre-based composite packaging and offers

designers a benchmark to align their packaging products with specialized recycling processes.

In the previous year, the inaugural Circularity by Design guideline was introduced with the objective of establishing clear design principles for fibre-based packaging that prioritizes recyclability. It encompasses design tables for each product category and offers recommendations for the standard recycling processes.

More info [here](#).

EVENTS

- Intergraf Directors' Conference 2023, 2-5 September.
- Intergraf Currency + Identity Conference 2023 in Bilbao, 18-20 October 2023. More info [here](#).

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