

How to produce  
a special label  
picture gallery online

# Narrow WebTech

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Weekly newsletter  
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Special section **Digital Printing** today

20 years of label printing  
A review of technology  
and companies

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**BPiF** labels

## A note from the general manager Graham Backhouse

### Twenty years of progress

By 1998 I had already spent 20 years of my working life in the label industry, a very different animal to the one we see today but no less exciting. It would be impossible to comment on all the changes and developments over the last twenty years in this article. In the UK label industry, letterpress print was regarded as having the superior quality, many thought that flexo could not adequately meet the challenges of printing process images, how things have changed.

Even in the letterpress world many thought that unless the press was manufactured in Switzerland top quality print could not be produced especially on those common impressions cylinder machines built in Japan. They were wrong, but it was hard work proving it to the plethora of Packaging Technologists employed by the major retailers. Where are they all now?

Many UK companies used dedicated repro houses to produce their artwork and manufacture their films and printing plates. Service levels and quality were very high but as the market changed and delivery lead times were driven to become shorter and shorter, companies increasingly looked to establish in house facilities which is now

standard practice. Over the next few years and on-going today, plate and ink manufacturers bounced off of each other's developments, resulting in a virtually continuous improvement of print quality across all print processes. However the advances of flexographic plates, ink and curing have completely changed the views and utilisation of this process. Quality is now unquestionably high and the presses run at much higher speeds than many who ran the letterpress process could ever have imagined. Alongside these developments computer power has progressed at a rapid rate enabling great advances in the processing of image data both at the pre-press stage and in the advancement of imaging direct from file.

Twenty years ago few could have anticipated the scope of development of the digital process in labels and packaging. It all started around 1993 when the first digital presses came onto the market. The whole industry was interested and intrigued with the potential, but few decided to invest in those early days. By around the year 2000 HP invested in Indigo and the pace of advancement of digital was to change forever. There is now a whole range of high quality digital equipment available from an increasing list of



Source: BPiF labels

manufacturers, prices and markets and the digital process can now run high quality process work at speeds comparable with those letterpress machines some loved so much all those years ago.

Digital print is a marketers dream with the potential only being limited by the imagination of those with access to it, but no single process can fulfil all those visions and whilst multi process machines have been around longer than for the last 20 years we are now seeing the massive potential of combining the power of contemporary computers, conventional processes, digital print processes and a range of other embellishment processes in one manufacturing flow. Who knows where we will be in 20 years from now.

Graham Backhouse  
General manager BPiF labels



### Contact BPiF labels

Full details on events, sponsorship opportunities, and booking forms are available on the website ([www.bpiflabels.org.uk](http://www.bpiflabels.org.uk)) or directly from Liz Whyte ([liz.whyte@bpif.org.uk](mailto:liz.whyte@bpif.org.uk))



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## Membership

BPIF labels is the labels special interest group of the British Print Industries Federation. In recognition that label printing and converting has its own unique machinery, processes, markets and resulting challenges the special interest group was established to work closely with UK label printers and their suppliers to educate, inform and support the UK label industry. It also represents the interest of the sector to the UK government and through its association membership of FINAT to the EU parliament in Brussels.

BPIF labels members can join the label special interest group for a very modest fee and access additional information, services and training events that relate more specifically to the very specialised label sector of print and packaging. The group also hold social networking events such as the Spring and Autumn golf days.

## GDPR

The DPA (Data Protection Act) will be replaced by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) on the 25th May 2018, and the PECR (Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations) will be replaced with the new ePrivacy Regulation (ePR). The new ePR will not be agreed by the EU before the GDPR comes into effect and existing PECR rules will continue to apply until the ePR is finalised and comes into effect. All these regulations restrict the way organisations (you!) can carry out unsolicited direct marketing so it's worth familiarising yourself with them all. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) have made it clear that under the GDPR



companies continue to have data protection responsibilities for the personal information they process in their work in a similar way to their current obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998. They also stress that the GDPR rules also apply to political parties and not-for profit organisations. The GDPR contains substantial fines for failing to comply with its requirements including fines of up to EUR 20 million, or 4% of your total worldwide annual turnover, whichever is higher. BPIF have produced an article in response to queries on the implications of the GDPR on direct marketing to customers: <https://bit.ly/2Fghr8d>

## Events

### ■ FINAT European Label Forum – 6th – 8th June

FINAT are holding their annual European Label Forum in Dublin this year. Covering the current "Hot Topics" in the industry and with Brexit on the horizon it is an incredible opportunity to meet with peers across Europe and exchange views and ideas.

The conference is not just for FINAT members and UK/Ireland label companies this year can attend at the same rates as members. Members of National associates such as BPIF labels can also attend at FI-NAT member rates.

The programme this year includes keynote speeches from Alastair Campbell, Sarah Sladek and Noreena Hertz. The full programme can found here: <https://www.europeanlabelforum.com/programme/>

### ■ Rotometrics Open Day – 3rd/4th July

BPIF Labels supports their partner members, Rotometrics at their European Open event in early July. There will be a number of speakers from across the industry together with the inspiring Sir Ralph Fiennes.

### ■ BPIF Members Day – 4th July

This year's BPIF Members' Day will take place on Wednesday 4th July featuring a morning conference followed by the 2018 Annual General Meeting of the British Printing Industries Federation.

### ■ AGM

In the afternoon members will be provided with a review of the key achievements made by the BPIF over the past year and will have an opportunity to ask questions of CEO, Charles Jarrold, and president, Darren Coxon, Pensord.

### ■ All-Party Parliamentary Print Group Reception

Attendees are then invited to join us afterwards on the Terrace at the House of Lords for the annual All-Party Parliamentary Print Group (APPPG) Reception, an excellent opportunity to network with MPs, Lords and Peers.

### ■ BPIF labels Autumn/Winter Golf Day – 18th October

Did you miss the Spring/Summer Golf Day on 17th May? Although details are not finalised there will be a BPIF labels Autumn/Winter Golf Day. The plan is to hold this event at the Celtic Manor on 18th October 2018.

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