

# FTA Europe News

## Association News 2-6

- Crisis and opportunity: FTA Europe's COVID-19 Survey
- FTA Europe's new technical projects: ISO, test forms, Toolbox
- Sweflex hold successful annual event

## EU Policy Corner 6

- Packaging and waste continue to be focus of EU's green transition

## Events 7

- FTA Europe Diamond Awards 2021 & industry events

## Industry News 9

- Packaging Trends Roundup
- Intergraf Economic Report on dominance of flexo and the packaging market

**FTA Europe: The European Flexographic Industry Association**

Avenue Louise 130A, 1050 Brussels, Belgium

+32 (0) 2 230 86 46

[info@fta-europe.eu](mailto:info@fta-europe.eu)

[www.FTA-Europe.eu](http://www.FTA-Europe.eu)



Clearly, the flexo community has shown its strengths: flexibility and ingenuity. From FTA Europe, to national associations, to companies, and along the value chain, ensuring smooth communication in a disrupted world was essential. This meant that EU consumers have been able to “eat healthy and without deprivation” - as one of our members rightly concluded.

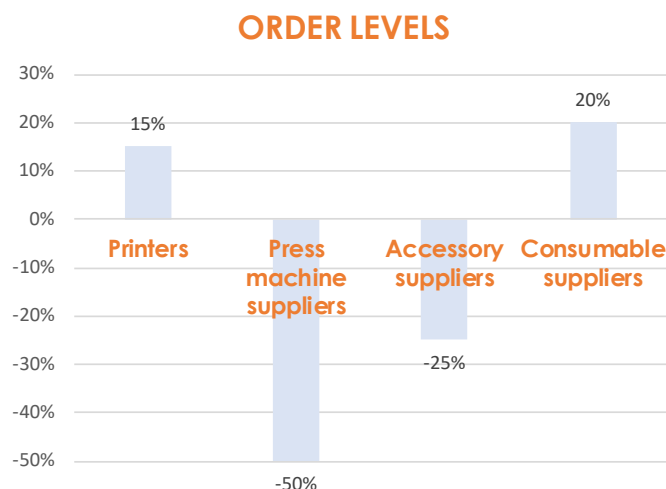
## COVID-19 Survey: printers' and suppliers' stories

FTA Europe's member associations, printers, and suppliers shared similar stories. Those in the printed packaging value chain had consistent or increased demand at the height of the crisis; those reliant on the custom of closed businesses struggled. Maintaining morale amongst staff was a top priority during the height of the crisis.

Another key issue was ensuring continued supply of essential components, particularly due to the heightened pressure from consumers as well as due to border closures. For printers, obtaining synthetic ethyl alcohol was difficult because of the increased production of disinfectant at the height of the crisis. FTA Europe and its members worked hard with the authorities to resume regular supplies.

Although in general the demand for new machines decreased, some packaging printers bought new presses to meet the extra demand. Other machine suppliers said that focus was on maintaining customer contacts to finalise a sale post-lockdown. Installing machines took place virtually. Communication was widely seen as a challenge, particularly when technical conversations between printer and supplier were required. However, digital communication has become normalised, and many survey respondents said this is set to continue for certain tasks, as it is seen as a time and cost saving measure.

### Snapshot of Italy - how did orders change? (Estimates Q1/Q2 2019 vs Q1/Q2 2020)



communication  
teleworking  
supplies  
safety  
shipping  
motivation  
social distancing  
border crossing  
absenteeism  
flexibility  
delivery  
challenge  
hygiene  
health  
working 24/7  
site visits  
digital  
technician support  
productivity  
supply  
payments  
quality  
coordinating  
sales  
capacity  
security

## COVID-19 Survey: what does the future hold?

Four clear themes emerged from the answers associations, printing companies, and suppliers gave when asked if there will be any long-term impacts of COVID-19.

### 1: WORKING HABITS

People are at the heart of flexo and the crisis shone a light on this

**M**otivating and supporting staff who have worked under high pressure during the crisis will be a key priority

**V**irtual meetings & company visits have become the norm and this will continue for some tasks and meetings

**T**ravel abroad will reduce in comparison to pre-COVID-19

**S**mart working, teleworking, using digital tools are and will be used to a greater extent

### 2: DEMAND & PRODUCTS

**C**onsumers: the "toilet paper effect" led to a spike in demand of certain products during crisis, but this will regulate over time (usage has not increased)

**P**rinters: were unwilling to start new projects, but pressured suppliers to meet extra orders. Suppliers hope new projects can start again

**T**he end of "plastic bashing"? Some reported that hygiene concerns and the need for food longevity changed people's perception of plastic. But others said there will be no long-term impact on the (negative) way the wider public view this substrate.

### 3: FINANCE & BUSINESS

**S**ocial distancing is anticipated to impact production, and processes will need to be adapted

**F**inancial stability & paying back loans taken out during the crisis are a concern for the long-term

**M**ergers and acquisitions may become more common as the larger, more cash-rich companies seek expansion and growth again

### 4: INNOVATION

**I**ntestments in innovaton will begin again as companies re-focus on the long-term

**E**thanol shortages during the crisis have motivated some to move away from solvent based plate technologies

**I**ncreased alcohol prices have prompted a search for alternative printing inks

**S**mart, digital solutions have been created along the value chain for efficiency

## New technical projects on ISO standards, test forms, and the FTA Europe Toolbox

FTA Europe is pleased to announce that its Technical Committee is working on three new projects to advance the flexo printing industry. The first project will analyse ISO standards and their use by flexo printers – with a view to contributing to the development of new standards. The second seeks to define a test form which can easily verify the capabilities of a flexo press. The third project, due to start later in the year, will focus on the next stages of the FTA Europe Flexo Best Practice Toolbox, currently on sale on Apple Books and iTunes.

The member associations of FTA Europe appointed experts from each of their countries to participate in the projects. The teams for project 1 and 2 met for the first time this month. Both printers and suppliers are represented, meaning the Technical Committee is working with the whole industry in mind.

Leading the first project on ISO standards is Chair Tim Claypole (WCPC/icm Print) and Vice Chair, and flexo expert, Stefano D'Andrea. For the second project on creating a test form, Kristof Lobeau (Athena Graphics) is Chair, with support from Juan Campillos (Hubergroup) as

**Flexo is a fast-growing sector. These projects reflect the level of innovation and development happening in flexo firms.**

Vice Chair. The third project on the Toolbox, has Silvano Tamai (tesa) as Chair, and Johan Holmström (Sweflex) as Vice Chair.

Flexo is a fast-growing sector. The project topics were chosen to reflect the level of innovation and development happening in flexo firms. These projects will provide tangible support to companies in our sector.

FTA Europe sincerely thanks all our chairs and project team members for dedicating time in their busy schedules to work towards the common goal of furthering the flexo industry.





## Association News

# Sweflex holds hybrid virtual-physical annual meeting

Sweflex held their annual meeting on 11 June 2020. This year, the yearly event took place as a hybrid virtual and physical event, with social distancing measures in place for those who met in-person. COVID-19 has meant adjusting to ensure business continuation. Hybrid events like this will increasingly become the norm.

During the meeting, the FTA Europe Best Practice Toolbox was discussed, as well as preparations for the 'Absolute Flexo Future 2020 – Flexo technology in 2025' event, scheduled to take place in October. Sweflex is positive that this can still go ahead in a fully physical format.

For those present at the physical event, it was a great opportunity to reconnect and discuss developments in the industry.



## EU Policy Corner

# Packaging and waste continue to be focus

There have been repeated calls for Europe's exit from the COVID-19 crisis to be a "green recovery" - indicative of the sustained focus on sustainability.

The revision of the **Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive**, in particular the essential requirements for packaging design, will be an important area for flexo printers to monitor. Although design and substrate decisions are generally made by the brand owner, part of this revision is expected to look at rules on waste - which impacts the entire packaging value chain. A European Commission consultation

will remain open until August.

The European Commission is also continuing to review legislation applicable to **food contact materials**, due to the concern of chemical migration from packaging. FTA Europe is now working with Intergraf, the EU association for the printing industry, to monitor and contribute to the developing situation.

For an overview of the EU's plans to achieve the aim of a digital and ecological transition, download **FTA Europe's guide** here: <https://bit.ly/2UPZtTK>

## Events

### 2020

TBC/2020 ATEF Graphispack's national flexo awards, ES

#### SEPTEMBER

**NEW DATE** 17/09/2020 EFIA's national flexo awards, online event

#### OCTOBER

6-7/10/2020 Diamond Awards judging session, Brussels, BE

**NEW DATE** 22/10/2020 Absolute Flexo Future 2020 - Flexo technology in 2025, Halmstad, SE

#### DECEMBER

**NEW DATE** 7-9/12/2020 E-Pack Europe, Amsterdam, NL

### 2021

#### MARCH - APRIL

**NEW DATE** 25/02 - 03/03/2021

InterPACK, Düsseldorf, DE

**NEW DATE** 20-30/04/2021

drupa 2020, Düsseldorf, DE

**NEW DATE** 22/04/2021

**FTA Europe Diamond Awards, Düsseldorf, DE**

**NEW DATE** 20/05/2021 EFIA's national flexo awards, York, UK

## Flexo Best Practice Toolbox

Do it right the first time



Get it on  
**Apple Books**



**Innovative learning tool**

**Save time and costs**

**High quality, safe results**

**Improve workflow**

**Multilingual**

[www.FTA-Europe.eu](http://www.FTA-Europe.eu)

# 2021 FTA Europe Diamond Awards

22 April 2021

InterContinental Hotel Düsseldorf

## SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

### DIAMOND SPONSOR



**GOLD SPONSOR (1 LEFT!)**  
**€ 5,000**

Appear in promotional material, both online and in print; have visibility during the ceremony; 1 X 10-seat table; present to one winner; banner at the ceremony showing logo

**SILVER SPONSOR**  
**€ 2,500**

Visibility in the promotional material and during the award ceremony; 10-seat table for € 1,350 + VAT OR 2 free tickets

**COCKTAIL AND AFTER PARTY SPONSOR (X3)**  
**€ 2,500**

Visibility in the promotional material; visibility during the cocktail reception (preceding and following the ceremony)

*If you are interested in sponsoring the ceremony or for further information, please contact your national flexo association or Annie Scanlan [ascanlan@fta-europe.eu](mailto:ascanlan@fta-europe.eu)*

Individual tickets: € 185 + VAT

10-seat table: € 1,500 + VAT

[www.fta-europe.eu](http://www.fta-europe.eu)

**ATEF**

AGRUPACIÓN  
TECNICA  
ESPAÑOLA  
DE FLEXOGRAFÍA

**ATF**  
FLEXO

association  
technique  
française de  
flexographie

**ATF**  
Associazione Tecnica  
Italiana per la Flessografia

**EFIA**  
EUROPEAN FLEXOGRAPHIC INDUSTRY  
ASSOCIATION

**EFTA**

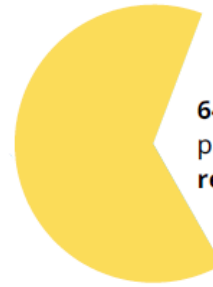
**GRAKOM Sweflex.**



## Industry News

### Packaging trends roundup - sustainability concerns persist

- The **British Plastics Federation (BPF)** — with the **Cosmetic, Toiletry and Perfumery Association (CTPA)** and the **Food and Drink Federation (FDF)** — have developed guidelines on recycled content in plastic packaging. [Read more.](#)
- Amid a reported surge in counterfeit goods during the COVID-19 crisis, **security printers** are seeing a rise in enquiries for track and trace solutions. This is particularly prominent in the pharmaceutical sector. [Read more.](#)
- Consulting company **Smithers** has released a guide to packaging sustainability trends. The main drivers in this area are: Government regulations; Consumer demands; Circular economy; Advanced materials; and Recycling and recovery technology. [Read more.](#)
- A new survey from **Smurfit Kappa** has revealed that sustainability is the main driver of R&D and new product development for businesses. Almost nine in ten businesses claim to have included used or recycled material in products or packaging as part of their sustainability strategies. [Read more.](#)
- NGO **Two Sides** has carried out a Europe-wide survey on consumer preferences and found that consumers want to change their behaviour to shop more sustainably. Paper packaging is preferred due to the ease of recycling, and almost half of consumers said they would avoid a shop that doesn't seemingly prioritise sustainability. [Read more.](#)



64% of consumers want packaging that is **easier to recycle**

© Smithers, 2020

### Intergraf Economic Report shows packaging decline in 2020

Intergraf's new Economic Report forecasts packaging and label printing revenues to decline by 3.2% to EUR84 bn in 2020 before rallying again in the short and medium term. In 2019, flexo was proved again as the single largest printing process sector with an output of EUR40.2 bn. For further detail, Intergraf members can obtain the report for free, or the report costs €290+VAT.

More information here: <https://www.intergraf.eu/communications/annual-economic-report>.

FIGURE 3 Trends in European Printing & Printed Packaging Output, 2000-2024f (€ billion, constant 2018 prices & exchange rates)

