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Merry Christmas from FTA Europe



Whilst 2020 has proved to be extremely challenging in many ways, FTA Europe has worked hard to launch new projects and keep the flexo community connected.

Key achievements were:

- launching the test forme project (more information on the next page)
- projects on ISO and the Toolbox
- launching a Marketing Committee
- lobbying national governments and the EU during the height of the COVID-19 lockdown to protect the industry's supply chains
- launching a joint task force on food contact

materials with Intergraf, the federation for the printing industry

- carrying out surveys on the impact of COVID-19, and sharing best practice between the members
- PLUS doing all this virtually, with zero physical meetings!

Thank you to FTA Europe's member associations, and of course the innovative, essential companies we work for.

We look forward to working closely with this fantastic industry in the new year.

Flexo needs you!

Help us create a new test forme



FTA Europe needs your help to shape the future of flexo by helping us develop a standard test forme for flexographic printers. To ensure that the test forme reflects the needs of printers, we invite you to fill out a very short (5 minute) survey about how you currently test your machines.

The survey can be accessed here:
<https://bit.ly/2FOtobq>

The survey is available in English, French, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, and Swedish. The results of this project therefore will truly be a pan-European solution for the testing needs of flexo printers.

The FTA Europe standard test forme will help printers to understand the characteristics of any printing press to:

- evaluate the technical features when purchasing a new or second - hand press;
- compare and align the output quality of different presses;
- maintain the characteristics of components

and materials over time that were specified at purchase or start-up;

- define a coherent relationship between prepress and print;
- rapidly identify the cause of defects and set the necessary corrections in place;
- evaluate new materials or components (anilox, inks , etc.) and benchmark;
- verify output quality in conformity with existing norms and guidelines.

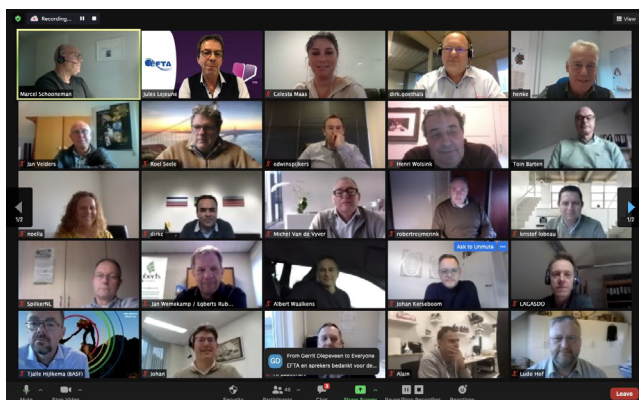
By completing the survey, you will also receive a **free report of the interim results** to find out how other printers are testing their machines. You will also receive the **final report** with the overall results, and you can choose to receive updates about the progress of the project.

For more information about this project, contact info@fta-europe.eu

EFTA Benelux goes virtual & more!

Successful launch of webinar series

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, EFTA Benelux's first Technical Theme Day could not take place in-person. The idea of this events series is to bring together multidisciplinary experts to discuss the similarities and differences between narrow and wide web flexo printing. The in-person programme has been postponed to 2021.



inks.

The webinar, EFTA's first in its history, attracted more than 70 registrations, with 55 participants attending at the peak. A big thanks to Board Members Henk Edzes (LPF Flexible Packaging), Dirk Goethals (Athena Graphics) and André Lauckhart (Flexo Vision) for their organisation.



Programme 2021

2021 will be a special year for EFTA Benelux, as it will be 40 years since the association was established as EFTA Netherlands. In the first half of 2021, the association will continue its programme of online events and will host a series of Flexo Masterclasses replacing the association's live 'Flexo Academy'.

After the summer, pending the successful progress of COVID-19 vaccination programmes, the association expects to host live events again. It has already been announced that on Thursday 18 November 2021, Antwerp will host the 4th edition of the EFTA Benelux Flexo awards. This event will also celebrate the association's 40th anniversary.

Interview with Roel Seele

As a prelude to the association's celebration year, President Roel Seele gave an interview to Lejeune Association Management. The interview can be read [here](#).

“Customers are looking for ways to reduce their environmental footprint by moving away from solvent-based inks.”

However, not to delay the opportunity to bring members together, on 19 November, a virtual event was held. Under the title, 'Water based inks for flexo printed film packaging', EFTA hosted a 1.5-hour webinar featuring three distinguished speakers: Tjalle Hijlkema of BASF; Johan Kerseboom of Flint Group; and Marcel Schooneman of Windmüller und Hölsche. Each covered a different angle of the flexible packaging market, where customers are looking for ways to reduce their environmental footprint by moving away from solvent-based

Events

2021

JANUARY

21/01/2021 AB Flexo Awards, online event

27-28/01/2021 Diamond Awards judging session, Brussels, BE

APRIL

22/04/2021 **FTA Europe Diamond Awards**

MAY

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

OCTOBER

6-8/10/2021 Absolute Flexo Future 2020 - Flexo technology in 2025, Halmstad, SE

SEPTEMBER

1-24/09/2021 Labelexpo Europe 2021, Brussels, BE



Flexo Best Practice Toolbox
Do it right the first time

FTA
EUROPE WE ARE FLEXO

Innovative learning tool
Save time and costs
High quality, safe results
Improve workflow
Multilingual

Get it on
Apple Books

www.FTA-Europe.eu

The advertisement features a central 3D illustration of a multi-level industrial structure with various components labeled 'FLEXO BEST PRACTICE'. The background is a blurred image of a flexo printing machine in operation. The FTA Europe logo is in the top right corner. A list of benefits is on the right, and an Apple Books download button is at the bottom left. The website URL is at the bottom right.

Regulating packaging: how to be sustainable and maintain functionality?

Design for sustainability. Protecting human health. Maintaining supplies of essential products. These are important aims that should function together. The European Commission currently has three ongoing initiatives which will impact packaging producers:

- **Review of the Framework Regulation and rules for food contact materials**
- **Review of the Packaging & Packaging Waste Directive, in particular waste targets and the essential (design) requirements of packaging**
- **Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability (CSS)**

Whilst there are strong, and justified, concerns about packaging ending up in the environment, the solutions discussed may mean a missed opportunity for Europe's green transition.

For instance: focussing on reducing packaging as an aim in itself, does not take into account life cycle analyses and may not reduce the overall carbon footprint of packaging. Taking into account the processes to make each component of the packaging, how its transported, and how it will be used are key considerations.

There could also be serious consequences for food packaging producers if new rules require them to use a certain percentage of recycled material in the packaging, risking harmful chemical migration. The bid for greater sustainability must not undermine human health.

The total phase out of PFAS, as set out in the CSS, is plagued with unknowns and questions. If only essential uses are permitted, how is that defined? How do we ensure alternatives are safe, and readily available so that there are no product shortages?

These are just a few examples of the issues that will need to be worked out between the EU institutions and industry as each of these files progress.

Innovation is happening everywhere in flexo: from using water-based inks, to in-house plastics recycling for non-food product packaging applications. Policymakers must recognise this and ensure that any new rules do not hamper innovation. Printers must be able to offer their customers a full range of substrates and applications to remain competitive.

Packaging is part of a large and complex system. To reduce its environmental impact, all parts of the industry must work in harmony. Packaging should be well-designed by brand owners; producers should eliminate wasteful processes; the market for secondary raw materials must be competitive; consumers must recycle correctly; and waste collection infrastructure must be able to deal with innovative packaging.

Packaging is an essential product. It protects the food, helping to avoid product spoilage, and provides information to the consumer about the product and its disposal. The flexo industry is part of the solution. This is the opportune moment for Europe to improve sustainability and fight climate change. It would truly be a missed opportunity if waste was simply moved, rather than eliminated.



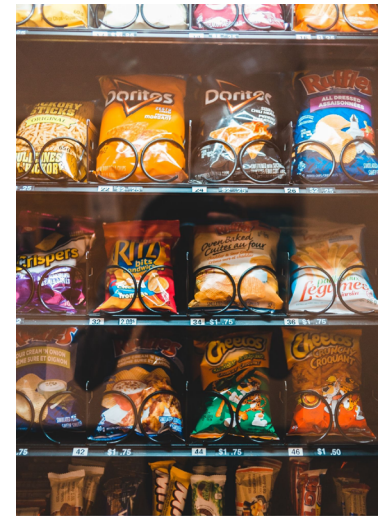
Industry News

Global forecast of the flexible plastic packaging market to 2025

Packaging Newsletter has published the forecast for flexible plastic packaging which predicts the market to grow from USD 160.8 billion in 2020 to USD 200.5 billion by 2025, at a CAGR of 4.5% from 2020 to 2025.

Key conclusions:

- COVID-19: bulk stocking, panic buying, and increased online ordering all increase demand for flexible plastic packaging.
- Drivers for market growth include the need for cost-effectiveness, long shelf-life, and convenient packaging
- Restraints for market growth include poor infrastructure facilities for recycling
- Opportunities include innovating for sustainability, in part as a result of consumer preference and regulation
- Pouches are predicted to be a growing product sector
- APAC region is predicted to continue being the market leader



Read more: <https://bit.ly/37khHmL>

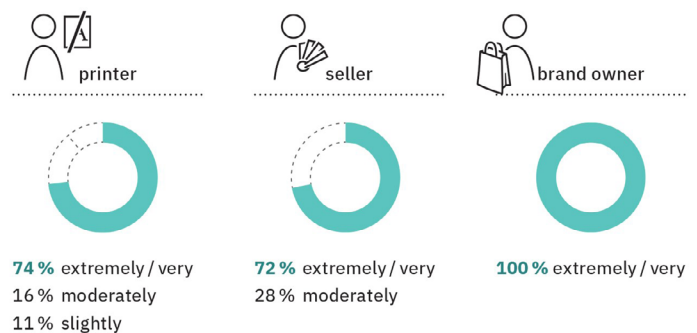
Flexo machine market worth EUR1 billion

According to recent data published by ACIMGA - the association of Italian manufacturers of machinery for the graphic, paper and converting industry - the turnover of the world market for flexographic machines by the end 2019 was EUR1 billion. Read more: <https://bit.ly/33ScBN0>

Views on sustainability: printers and brand owners

Mondi asked printers, sellers and brand owners all over Europe: How can we achieve our sustainability goals? 53% of brand owners find it very important that print projects are produced CO2 neutrally, while only 39% of printers believe their customers find this very important. The survey results can be downloaded here: <http://bit.ly/3qWVKDf>

How important is reducing your company's carbon footprint?



Source: Modi

New tool to help companies measure circularity

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation has developed a company-level measuring tool (for any industry) which "reveals the extent to which a company has achieved circularity across its entire operations". Read more: <https://bit.ly/33vvWUC>