

For genuine sustainability, add a 4th “P” to your bottom line

Over the last three years numerous market studies, conducted in over 60 countries, have revealed there’s only one thing that people will pay extra for — sustainability. Despite the difficult economic climate of the last decade, with salaries and buying power often much reduced, almost three out of four consumers — in particular, the so-called “millennials” — are willingly pay a premium for sustainable products and services.

If you’re a forward-looking printer, this represents an opportunity to maintain margins, but it pays to ask yourself what exactly we mean by “sustainability”. For most people, it means saving energy, reducing waste and using renewable resources where possible, but in reality there is much more to it than that.

To be sure your business is truly sustainable you need to measure a “triple bottom line” that takes into account the full cost of running your business. Traditionally, most companies just focus on profit (or loss), but there are two other “Ps” you need to measure to establish your sustainability credentials. The first P stands for “People”, and describes the impact of your operations on society (a difficult task); the second stands for “Planet”, and measures how your operations affect the environment (a truly complex task).

It’s worth the effort, however, because the outcome of these measurements will be a set of sustainability objectives that you can proactively communicate to customers, thus differentiating yourself in the crowded package printing market. And why stop at just three Ps? If you want to really stand out from your competitors, there’s a fourth you can add — the Printing Process. If you streamline all aspects of your operation, your offering becomes even more appealing.

However, to create a flexo printing operation that is genuinely more sustainable you need to acknowledge the importance of the overall supply chain, and your contribution to it. This means going further than simply communicating your credentials to your customers; it means nourishing a dialogue with and between all stakeholders — repro houses, other printers, consumables suppliers and, importantly, print buyers — on all the sustainability issues that concern everyone.

Encouraging such a dialogue is one of the goals of Kodak’s Global Flexo Innovation Awards. Launched to mark the 10th anniversary of the introduction of the revolutionary FLEXCEL NX system, the programme will highlight the overall rise of flexo over the last decade, while demonstrating the role played by both the technology and FLEXCEL NX users. The closing date for entries is 31st December 2018.

One of the four key criteria entries should demonstrate is a commitment to sustainable print. The independent judging panel that I chair will be at pains to understand the role of the “4th P” — the Printing Process — in your overall sustainability effort, and the extent to which you have involved the value chain in defining your offering.

For more information:

www.transformationalflexo.com



About the Author

Pier Luigi Sassanelli (Sass) joins the 10th Anniversary Kodak Flexo Innovation Awards as Lead Judge, bringing thirty years' worth of experience in the Graphic Arts and Flexo Industry in both consolidated and emerging economies.

Throughout his career, Sass' strong technical background has allowed him to move from technical to commercial senior management positions. He started with one of the leading Global Graphic Arts Systems Manufacturers and grew in one of the largest multinational companies. His passion for working with other cultures brought him first to the UK, and later to Germany, the USA, and Switzerland, where he lives today.

Sass was presented with the DuPont Marketing Excellence Award for leading the successful development and commercialization of the first Thermal Developer (Cyrel FAST 1000TD) in the USA and Europe and was honoured by Marmara University in Istanbul as one of the most innovative and creative people in the business. He is the proud founder of Flexo4All and a co-founder of the Global DuPont Corporate Marketing Academy, which he led in Europe for over 6 years before returning to one of DuPont's major strategic business units.

Lauded for his Marketing and Leadership skills, Sass was invited to co-develop a Marketing Excellence Program with renowned Professors of the Penn State Smeal College of Business and the Institute for the Study of Business Markets (ISBM). As one of the major experts in the industry on Marketing Strategies, MBA coaching, and young talent development, Sass is a dedicated advocate for helping others across every stage of their career.

He has appeared several times in top international trade magazines in the UK, USA, Germany, Spain, Italy, Poland, Turkey and Russia. He also wrote two books for the Marmara University of Istanbul Printing Faculty, which are still in use for the lectures.

Currently, in addition to being a freelance consultant, he serves as Non-Executive Director on the board of Vianord Engineering in France, one of the leading Flexo Platemaking Equipment Manufacturers in the world.



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