

FTA Europe News

Association News 2

- 2021 Diamond Awards

Members News 3-6

- EFIA launches 2021 print awards
- EFTA finds Diamond Awards judges
- New President at ATF Flexo
- ATIF launches new flexo training project

Events 7

- Events update & EFTA Benelux Masterclass schedule

EU Policy Corner

Member takeover! 8-9

- Grakom: Packaging as a resource?

Partners 10

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Join us at the 2021 Diamond Awards



The countdown has begun!

On **22 April at 17:30 CET**, you are invited to tune into the FTA Europe Diamond Awards. The show kicks off at **18:00 CET**.

There will be **two ways** to join the event:

1. **Join us on the platform** to watch and network (registrations to be launched soon).
2. **A link will be available** to simply watch the show without logging into the networking platform.

Option one enables you to connect with your global flexo colleagues. We recommend option two for big screen company viewings and COVID-19 safe parties!

The 2021 Diamond Awards will be the only major flexo event in Europe this year. FTA Europe will use the latest in awards ceremony software to stream this event, which includes a sophisticated networking platform. The Diamond Awards will

be the key opportunity to meet with your flexo colleagues and customers.

Our winners will be on stage in front of a huge global audience, and every member of staff who helped make the winning products will be able to join the event. This open event is only possible with the online format.

All entries are national gold winners, meaning the Diamond winners are truly the best of the best. Find out who has won this 'Champions League' of flexo printing at the virtual event on 22 April.

Check out the finalists [here](#). Winners will be announced on the night!

[Click attend](#) to the LinkedIn event to receive information about registrations first.

We are eternally grateful for our supportive sponsors. Meet them [here](#)!

EFIA launches 2021 print awards

The European Flexographic Industry Association (EFIA), FTA Europe's member in the UK, has opened the EFIA Print Awards competition for 2021. EFIA is accepting entries from across the flexographic printing industry.

After a challenging year, which saw many businesses having to respond to rapid increases in demand for packaging and develop exciting new innovations in the wake of Covid-19, the prestigious EFIA Print Awards provide the ideal opportunity to celebrate these incredible achievements.

EFIA's print awards play host to the brightest and best talents from across the sector

A highlight of the industry calendar, the EFIA Print Awards play host to the brightest and best talents from across the sector, showcasing the quality, efficiency, innovation, sustainability and technical developments that have become the hallmark of the industry.

Following last year's successful online event, EFIA is hopeful that the 2021 gala dinner will be an opportunity for the industry to celebrate in person.

This year's EFIA Print Awards Gala Dinner will take place on **November 4, 2021**, at the **National Railway Museum in York**. The Association is closely monitoring the ongoing pandemic, and further details will be announced in the coming months.

Last year, the awards ceremony was streamed live where numerous companies picked up gold awards, including FFP Packaging Solutions, Roberts Mart, Interflex Group, Encore Group, Reflex Group, Saica, Coveris, DSSmith Packaging and East Riding Sacks. The 2020 winners were also entered into the 2021 Diamond Awards, with many UK companies making it into the final.

Leading the winners was Smurfit Kappa, taking home a haul of 17 accolades. Best in Show was awarded to FFP Packaging Solutions for its Juicy Meat Company Large Beef Easy Cook Pouch which scooped gold in the Reverse Print Wide category.

Entries for the awards are now open, and the submission deadline is **July 31, 2021**.

For more information on the benefits of EFIA membership or to enter the awards, please visit www.efia.uk.com or contact EFIA on admin@efia.uk.com.



EFTA Benelux finds judging panel for Diamond Awards

The ongoing pandemic makes it a challenging time to organise events. In previous years, the panel of judges for the FTA Europe Diamond Awards comprised of a delegate judge from each member country. However, this year travel to Belgium, where we host the judges, was impossible due to COVID-19 measures.

Therefore, EFTA Benelux rose to the challenge and found a panel of expert judges to ensure that the judging session could take place on 18 February. Without a judging session, there can be no awards!

Dirk Goethals (Athena Graphics) and Dirk Cantens (Steurs), both EFTA Benelux members, were joined by Bart Calis (Arteveldehogeschool), Patrick De Grande (Quatre Mains) and Frank van der Mei (Jumbo). The panel therefore represented the entire flexo packaging supply chain - from design to sale.

“This award is really important, it’s an incentive.”



Jury Chairman Dirk Goethals commented:

“As with every year, the quality was high and it was difficult to make a choice. My main focus was on the print quality and not so much on the creativity or visual appearance of the packaging.”

As always, a few stand out where the jury is unanimous in its decision. The flexo industry is, above all, a proud industry with dedicated flexo printers. For many, it is, and remains, craftsmanship. Winning an international award boosts their ego and they can show it off through multimedia and their marketing. So yes, this award is really important, it's an incentive.”

Dirk Cantens added:

“This competition once again demonstrates the impressive evolution flexo has experienced in recent years and the flexo industry's commitment to being the leading packaging printing technology.”

The finalists have been chosen and can be viewed [here](#). The winners will be announced on **22 April** during the live show of this year's Diamond Awards.

New President at ATF Flexo

ATF Flexo, FTA Europe's member in France, has appointed Franck Leborgne as its new President. He succeeds Jean-Pierre Bonnet who has been appointed honorary president.

Mr Leborgne is a graduate of the Textile and Chemical Institute of Lyon. This plastics specialist began his career at Plasto Adhesives before joining the Barbier Group in 2002 where he successively held positions of responsibility in production. He is now the Group's Industrial Director.

“Our membership of FTA Europe continues to be highly important”

He will pursue the activities that make ATF Flexo such a recognised and indispensable association, while developing new tools and actions.

President Leborgne commented:

“I will continue my mission in line with what constitutes the DNA of the ATF: bringing together flexo professionals and more broadly



ATF President Franck Leborgne

the printed packaging sector. This will start with the ATF Flexostars competition and our annual congress.

I am looking forward to new challenges as ATF President, and helping to shape the future of flexo in France. Our membership of FTA Europe continues to be highly important for our advocacy work for the industry and collaboration with our partners across Europe.”

ATIF launches new flexo training project

ATIF, FTA Europe's Italian member, has launched a brand new flexo printing training project in partnership with [ENGIM](#).

ENGIM is a non-profit association which operates nationally in Italy, as well as internationally, for the development of young professionals and

workers. The kick-off meeting for the project, held on 11 February, involved the 4th year students of the Turazza Institute - based in Treviso.

During the meeting, the students were provided with information on ATIF's activities, particularly in the area of training. The students also learned

Members News

about the content that will be covered in the subsequent workshops.

Ira Nicoletti (owner of Diaven s.r.l.), coordinator of the Atif Education Commission, Stefano d'Andrea, flexo expert and ATIF teacher, and ATIF Director Monica Scorzino took part in the kick-off meeting.

The training program, promoted and supported by ATIF through its academy, includes three workshops for students and teachers for a total of 9 hours. This covers both theory and practice. There is also a "final test" to develop a food packaging product printed in two colours.

More information about ATIF's activities can be found at: www.atif.it



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Events

2021

APRIL

20-23/04/2021 drupa online

22/04/2021 [FTA Europe Diamond Awards, online](#)

MAY

20/05/2021 Sweflex's annual meeting, Halmstad, SE

SEPTEMBER

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

OCTOBER

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

NOVEMBER

04/11/2021 EFIA's national flexo awards, York, UK

10/11/2021 EFTA Benelux's national flexo awards, Antwerp, BE

17-18/11/2021 ATIF's national flexo awards and Flexo Day, Bologna, IT



Masterclass #3: inks and migration ([20 May](#))

Masterclass #4: substrates ([8 July](#))

Masterclass #5: laminates and bio-based materials ([23 September](#))

Masterclass #6: technical flexo printing: solvents, residual solvent content, surface tension and pre-treatment ([25 November](#))

[Sign up for the Masterclasses \(in Dutch\) here.](#)

Packaging as a resource: re-thinking consumption in the EU

In this comment piece, Thomas Torp, [Grakom's CEO](#), discusses how we should move away from the idea that packaging is a problem, and view waste as a resource. The original Danish version can be viewed [here](#).

On my desk is the EU Packaging & Packaging Waste Directive. If that sounds a little dry – it is. However, this Directive, and the forthcoming revision, is crucial both for the environment and Danish companies. If revised correctly, this Directive could potentially support one of the decade's biggest business opportunities as well as solve the challenge with increasing amounts of packaging waste. Packaging has great potential if not only seen as a problem.

Increasing packaging

Packaging consumption is growing. It is estimated that packaging demand will grow steadily, reaching \$1.05 trillion in 2024 (Smithers, 2019). Considering packaging as a problem means that tools are taken out of the toolbox which could be used to progress as a society.

Increased use of packaging is closely tied to increase prosperity. Of course, we should not use more packaging than is absolutely necessary, but we can handle it with the right ingenuity and innovation.

“Companies have a unique opportunity to set high standards and will become more competitive in the global market as a result.”

Packaging design needs to be improved and refined so that it can be recycled. This should be the focal point of the EU's packaging policy. Companies have a unique opportunity to set high standards and will become more competitive in the global market as a result.

Waste is a valuable resource

In a recent report on its climate partnerships, the Danish Government concluded that:

“There are great business opportunities in perceiving waste as a valuable resource, and there is therefore a need for framework conditions that support Danish green growth in the form of both the development of packaging solutions and recycling technology.”

The packaging industry unequivocally shares this view. We must speak positively and constructively about packaging. The industry is not opposed to measures which seek to improve the environmental impact of production. Companies are innovative and adaptable. They see opportunities and want to share responsibility.

Regulatory framework

Innovation requires a properly functioning regulatory framework and public support to ensure that the demand support for new products is there. Unfortunately, it is still often price that drives the market for graphic products – including packaging. The EU institutions must oblige Member States to promote the development, use, and recycling of green packaging. The revision of the EU Packaging & Packaging Waste Directive should be as ambitious as possible to secure the European Commission's desired results: climate friendly packaging.

When authorities and public institutions take the lead in demanding green solutions, they promote the production of green packaging, thereby developing the market and increasing opportunities for private companies. This also creates a competitive pressure for companies to prioritise the environment.

Consumers must be involved

If the green transition is to take place in earnest, it is crucial that consumers are involved. Consumers must create the demand that pushes for the green transition. Here, too, the EU plays a crucial role.

European consumers are becoming more and more environmentally and climate conscious, but although many want to support the green transition, it is difficult for individuals to carry out the desired actions, as there is a lack of benchmarks and communication from authorities.

The EU must drive information to Europe's citizens to equip them with the right information to make informed choices. Cracking down on green claims, smart buzzwords, and fake news is key here.

Ensuring a fair debate around substrates is also important. Packaging is designed with functionality in mind to protect the product inside.

The symbol of the right choice

For the benefit of consumer information, the EU already possess an excellent tool: eco-labels. The use of labels must be actioned offensively and be the symbol for the consumer of the right choice. Unfortunately, eco-labels are often not used on the packaging. This means that the consumer is not informed of the product's environmental impact, which may influence their purchasing decision. In the EU, the flower eco-label should therefore be extended to



include packaging to ensure recycling and complete the circular economy.

Waste management must be uniform

The control of waste management is core to a well-functioning circular economy. Here, the EU has a long way to go. Although some countries, like Denmark, have made some future-oriented and important decisions about uniform waste fractions, there is a risk this approach will not have the desired effect if the rest of Europe does not follow suit.

With a more uniform waste sorting in the EU, it will be much easier for packaging producers to produce for recycling. It is the very core of circular economy. Packaging cannot be viewed solely as a problem. This removes tools from the toolbox to solve the problem of waste not being reused.

If we can find the big ambitions, there is both a strong, green transition and good business opportunities ahead.

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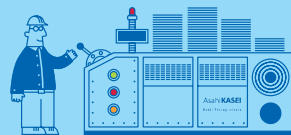
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