

GET INTO WIDE FORMAT WITH DES AND ROLAND  
 "YOU TRUST US WITH YOUR COLOUR"  
 NOW TRUST US WITH YOUR SIGN & DISPLAY SOLUTION"



Printing news and information for Australia & New Zealand

news

shop

employment

trade services

Print21



Search

## Latest News

PRINT

latest news

packaging

labels

wide-format

Supported by



## Twitter Feed

A pathway to failure – Alan King on OnDemand. There are some intractable problems facing the industry . This is one. <http://t.co/Tjh6xANmqD>

Michael Wu wins the battle for OnDemand – Plenty of disappointed printers in Melbourne over missing out <http://t.co/lXv3PtckzF>

Starleaton expands with Zund agency takeover | Print21 Ben Eaton is on the takeover track. <http://t.co/GRtavWVg6C> via @sharethis

Joan Grace quits Printing Industries & Future Print –

### Print has an exciting story to tell ... why is no one telling it? asks James Cryer

Wednesday, 27 April 2011

By Print21

Let's stop being bashful and get our voice into the marketplace, says *Print21* columnist James Cryer, who used the Easter break to write another manifesto on how the industry can raise its profile.

Our industry has recently been entertained by the ping-pong ball contest over the carbon tax – to be, or not to be. And I don't care if you agree with me, or, have your own crack-pot ideas. That's not the point.

The point is, for the first time, we've seen our industry vehemently express its views on something that is not directly print industry-related. I see this as a good thing, as our industry struggles to re-join the real world.

Over Easter we've seen various religious leaders pontificate on such topics as global warming and extreme weather events. The fact that they may be talking through their hats doesn't seem to concern them. They're also (like us) struggling for relevance in a changing world, and they've realised that while climate is, strictly speaking, outside their normal religious ambit, if they don't join the fray, they'll be regarded as irrelevant, antiquated relics of a bygone era.

Sound familiar?

But those of us in print, of all people, should recall Beatrice Warde's words, describing the printing industry as "fearless" and an "incessant trumpet", where "words may fly abroad". Instead, we could be accused of being timorous little church mice, too frightened to speak our mind publicly, as if that's not our role. (Aren't we in the communications business?)

We've convinced ourselves of our own irrelevance by walking away from our role as content generators. We're happy to print stuff, but we're uncomfortable in generating new ideas, proclaiming our position, sticking our neck on the line.

Some heretics even question the word "print" as being a bit so last century. Let's have the debate!

This is why the carbon debate has been a turning point in many ways. We should take the lead and become more assertive in expressing our views – as an industry – on a whole range of topics.



ADD THE PERFECT TOUCH

Click for SCODIX Options

GET INTO WIDE FORMAT WITH DES AND ROLAND

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR FUJIFILM GRAPHICS BLOG & BE ENTERED FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN AN Instax Mini 50S Camera with Film!

Trade Service of the week

Job of the week

Apprenticeships



Read the latest issue of Print21 magazine

Subscribe for your print copy



It may have been acceptable to have kept a low profile for the past few centuries, but we now have to compete with far more vocal, pro-active and assertive industries who are making a bigger noise than us on many fronts.

Issues such as the environment, attracting school-leavers, print versus the internet are just some of what needs to be addressed. And what about the establishment of a sovereign wealth fund? Are we in favour or against? Apprenticeship training? Are we happy with the present dog's breakfast? Immigration?

Phil Lawrence proudly tells us we're one of the most environmentally clean industries (an over 90 per cent improvement over the past decade). Who are we telling? Certainly not the mainstream media. Why haven't we been sending press releases to Paddy Manning, the *Herald* environmental writer in the business section? Other industries do. (Maybe we need a PR person in PIAA?)

We hold an extravagant back-slapping series of print awards events throughout the year. Where is the leverage we gain from promoting these showcase events to the wider public? To schools? To the media? NZ does it, maybe we could too.

To attract school-leavers we could create a website showing all the new and exciting aspects of print. It could include videos (like YouTube), interactive displays (build your own magazine/label/carton/POS display/mailling campaign ... anything!) – along with contact details: offset, packaging, magazines, out-door displays, etc. Kids only think online – so don't fight 'em, join 'em, in the strategic use of on-line media.

The role of industry associations is undergoing a transformation. We need less economic forecasting and more unabashed self-promotion. The attention is now on "branding" for the industry (see the PIAA's formation of a special-interest group to address this issue).

But at least we've made a start on telling the most exciting story never told.

**The industry can't afford to lose talent such as Joan Grace**  
[.http://ft.co/DuGDpXtwbC](http://ft.co/DuGDpXtwbC)

---

Colin Longbottom heads towards the exit Good man Colin, hope your saddlebags are well loaded for the sunset ride.<http://ft.co/d5oamorf2X>

---

If you enjoyed reading this article [Subscribe to the FREE Print21 news bulletin](#)

## Comment on this article

Name

E-Mail (will not be published)

Website

Receive comment notifications?

Comment

To receive notification of comments made to this article, you can also provide your email address below.

Email address

---

Advertising Enquiries | Copyright © 2012 PRINT21 | Published by blueline media