

2026 April

INTERGRAF

REGISTRATION IS OPEN

JUNE 5

PRINT MATTERS CONFERENCE

CONNECT, NETWORK AND BUILD THE FUTURE OF PRINT



B U D A P E S T

Registration opens for Print Matters 2026 in Budapest

Intergraf and the Nordic Printing Association (NOPA) are pleased to announce that registration is now [open](#) for the Print Matters 2026 conference, taking place on Friday, 5 June 2026 in Budapest, Hungary. The event will be preceded by a company tour to Pátria Printing Co. on Thursday, 4 June 2026.

As Intergraf's annual flagship conference, Print Matters brings together printing company executives, suppliers, market experts and association representatives from across Europe and beyond. Organised in partnership with NOPA, the event offers a dedicated platform to explore the most pressing strategic issues shaping the future of the European printing industry.

At a time when the sector is navigating regulatory developments, global market volatility, sustainability transformation and increasing security risks, Print Matters 2026 will deliver forward-looking insights and practical guidance across four key themes.

The Business Matters sessions will focus on retail and consumer insights, a company case study, and the Young Talent Award 2026, exploring opportunities for print in a hyper-personalised future. Under **Sustainability Matters**, discussions will address key developments including greenwashing considerations, evolving CO₂ calculation methodologies and corporate sustainability reporting requirements. The **Economic Matters** strand will provide perspectives on the US print market outlook, global paper market developments and worldwide production capacity across paper grades. Finally, **Security**

Matters will examine risk assessment, crisis management and business continuity strategies, alongside broader resilience topics such as automation and robotics.

The conference programme will feature international speakers and industry experts, combining market intelligence, case studies and strategic foresight to support business decision-making in an increasingly complex environment. In addition to the main conference on 5 June, participants are invited to join the company tour on 4 June, offering valuable practical insights and early networking opportunities. A welcome cocktail and conference dinner will further enhance the experience, providing a setting for informal exchange with peers from across the global print community.

Participants are encouraged to [register](#) early to secure their place at this key industry event. Registration is now open, and further details are available on the Intergraf website.

Print Matters 2026 promises to be an essential gathering for industry leaders looking to stay ahead of key developments and shape the future of print.



Study: European consumers prioritise recyclability and transparency in packaging

A new European consumer [survey](#) by Pro Carton highlights a clear shift in how packaging is perceived, with recyclability, transparency and sustainability playing a decisive role in purchasing decisions. Based on responses from 5,000 consumers across five European countries, the findings show that packaging is no longer a secondary consideration, but a key driver of trust and brand loyalty.

Economic pressure is strongly shaping consumer behaviour. The cost of living is identified as the biggest concern, and this is reflected in purchasing habits: 73% of consumers now say they will only buy sustainable products if they cost the same as alternatives, while just 27% are willing to prioritise sustainability regardless of price. This underlines the growing importance of affordable, sustainable packaging solutions.

At the same time, recyclability has become the leading priority. Nearly two in three consumers (64%) say that ease of recycling is the most important packaging feature, rising to 72% among those aged over 60. This places recyclability well ahead of other considerations such as renewable materials (40%) or functional features like resealability (39%) and ease of opening (35%).

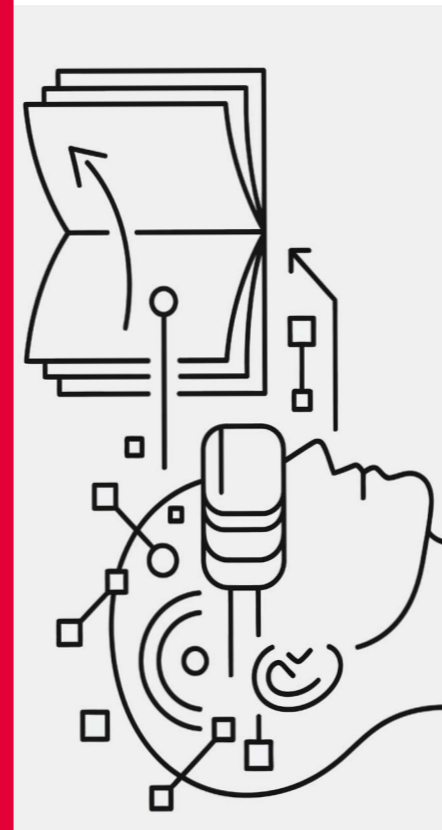
Consumer awareness is also high, with 84% saying they are confident about which materials can be recycled. This is reflected in strong material preferences: 84% of consumers prefer cartonboard over plastic packaging. Trust in recyclability is highest for paper and cartonboard (87%), while plastics, especially flexible plastics, continue to score significantly lower.

Packaging is increasingly influencing brand choice. Overall, 37% of consumers say they have switched brands due to packaging

concerns, with this figure rising to 54% among younger consumers aged 18–29. The main reasons include non-recyclable packaging, cited by 53% of those who switched, as well as excessive packaging and high plastic content. Transparency also plays a role: 73% of consumers are concerned about shrinkflation, and 80% say they would take action against brands engaging in it.

Despite economic pressures, sustainability remains an important factor in consumer trust. Around 66% of consumers say that sustainable packaging increases their trust in a product, while 85% report that they consider the climate impact of their purchases at least occasionally.

Overall, the survey highlights a more informed and demanding European consumer. Packaging is expected not only to protect products, but also to be recyclable, transparent and aligned with sustainability goals, while remaining affordable. For the printing and packaging industry, this reinforces the need to deliver solutions that balance environmental performance with economic realities.



Augmented reality and print: from innovation to integration

Augmented reality (AR) has long been presented as a promising bridge between physical and digital communication. In 2026, that promise is no longer theoretical. Rather than remaining a niche or experimental feature, AR is steadily becoming an integrated layer within modern print applications, particularly in packaging, marketing, and publishing.

Recent developments suggest that the most important shift is not technological, but structural. AR is no longer treated as a standalone innovation. Instead, it is increasingly embedded within broader “connected print” ecosystems, where printed materials serve as gateways to digital content and services. Packaging, in particular, is emerging as a central touchpoint in this transformation. By combining printed surfaces with QR codes, near-field communication (NFC), and image recognition technologies, brands are turning packaging into an interactive interface that enables consumers to access product information, immersive storytelling, and real-time updates.

This evolution reflects a broader redefinition of print’s role. Rather than being positioned in opposition to digital media, print is increasingly functioning as an entry point into digital environments. AR plays a key role in this shift by enhancing the physical experience without replacing it. A printed product, label, or page remains tangible and accessible, while offering an additional digital layer for those who choose to engage further.

At the same time, adoption patterns indicate a move away from highly complex or resource-intensive implementations. Earlier AR applications often relied on dedicated apps and bespoke development, which limited scalability and user uptake. Today, the focus has shifted toward more frictionless solutions, such as browser-based AR experiences

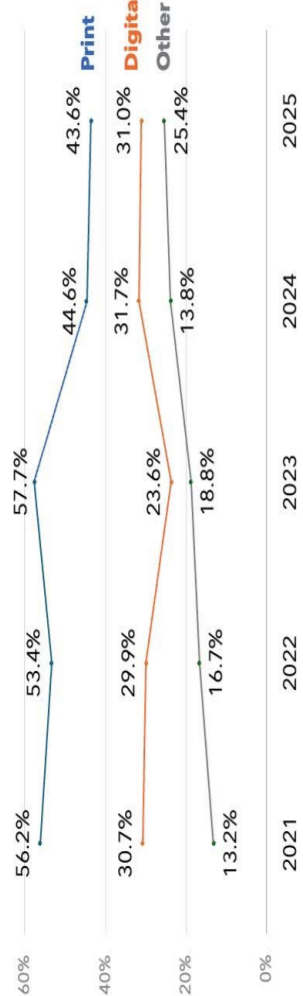
that can be accessed instantly via a simple scan. This reduction in barriers is making AR more viable for widespread use across the print value chain.

In parallel, AR is gaining renewed relevance in areas such as education and publishing. Interactive textbooks, enhanced learning materials, and hybrid reading experiences demonstrate how print can support engagement and comprehension in a digital age. This is particularly significant in the context of ongoing discussions around literacy, accessibility, and the cognitive benefits of reading on paper. By combining the strengths of print with carefully integrated digital features, AR-enabled materials offer new opportunities to support diverse learning needs without abandoning the advantages of physical formats.

Despite these advances, AR adoption remains measured rather than explosive. Challenges persist, including questions around return on investment and the need to ensure seamless user experiences.

For the printing industry, this development reinforces a key message. Print is not a static medium, but a dynamic platform capable of evolving alongside technological change. The integration of AR demonstrates how print can remain relevant and competitive by complementing digital tools rather than competing with them. As such, AR should be understood not as a disruption to print, but as an extension of its capabilities.

Breakdown of global publisher revenue by source (2021-2025)
What percentage of your total revenue comes from the following sources?



Source: World Press Trends Outlook 2025-2026

World Press Trends Outlook: diversification, AI, and collaboration drive cautious optimism

After more than two decades of declining traditional revenues, the global news publishing industry is entering a new phase of structural adjustment. According to the World Press Trends Outlook 2025–2026, based on [insights](#) from over 170 media executives across 66 countries, publishers are stabilising their business models through diversification, technological investment, and new forms of collaboration. Despite ongoing economic and political pressures, the overall direction is one of adaptation rather than retreat.

A key shift is the emergence of a three-pillar revenue model. Print remains the largest contributor, accounting for 43.6% of total revenues, though down from 56.2% five years ago. Digital now represents 31%, with steady growth in circulation but more volatile advertising performance. The strongest expansion comes from alternative revenue streams — including events, e-commerce, and partnerships — which now generate over a quarter of total income, nearly doubling since 2021. Together, these pillars are creating a more balanced and resilient economic foundation.

Artificial intelligence has rapidly become a central strategic priority, with over 90% of publishers planning investment in AI and data analytics. While adoption is most advanced in newsrooms, its use in monetisation and audience engagement is still developing, pointing to significant growth potential.

At the same time, the rise of the creator economy is reshaping content strategies. Most publishers now see creators as partners rather than competitors, experimenting with new storytelling formats and collaborative models to reach audiences. This reflects a broader shift toward more flexible, audience-centric approaches that blend editorial authority with new forms of digital engagement.

Another important dimension is the growing role of direct audience relationships. Subscription programmes, and first-party data strategies are becoming central to long-term sustainability, reducing reliance on volatile advertising markets. In this context, trust, brand identity, and the perceived value of quality journalism are emerging as key competitive assets.

However, the report also highlights growing challenges to media freedom, with nearly half of organisations reporting worsening conditions, particularly in the digital space through online harassment, restricted access to information, and cyber threats. These pressures underline the increasingly complex environment in which publishers must operate.

Overall, the findings point to an industry in transition, building more diversified and resilient models. The future of news publishing will depend on integrated approaches that combine print, digital, and new revenue streams, while adapting to technological change and safeguarding democratic values.



When visibility falls but effectiveness remains: the magazine advertising paradox

Magazine advertising continues to deliver strong results. Yet magazines themselves are becoming harder to find in everyday retail. Shelf space in supermarkets, stations, and convenience stores is shrinking, pushing titles out of view and, increasingly, out of mind.

According to [Power of Print](#), this creates a growing paradox. A medium that remains effective risks being perceived as declining simply because it is less visible.

The distinction matters. Advertising effectiveness is about what happens when an ad is seen and read. Visibility, however, is about whether magazines are present and easy to find in daily life. As retail presence declines, the market begins to confuse the two. “Harder to find” becomes “less relevant”, and reduced visibility is mistaken for reduced impact.

The loss of space is not driven by a rejection of magazines, but by retail economics. Shelf space must deliver fast, predictable returns, and magazines are a complex category to manage. Administrative burden, frequent turnover, and low yield per square metre all make them vulnerable when stores optimise for efficiency.

This challenge is further complicated by a fragmented retail landscape. Large chains prioritise simplicity and speed, independent outlets struggle with operational complexity, while specialist magazine shops demonstrate that visibility can still be strong when it is actively curated and designed. This suggests that visibility is no longer guaranteed by default retail presence, but must be deliberately rebuilt through smarter distribution, better ranging, and stronger brand positioning.

But the consequences go beyond retail. As magazines disappear from everyday environments, they also risk disappearing from media plans. Visibility shapes perception, and perception influences investment. When a medium is no longer seen, it can quickly be assumed to be in decline, regardless of its actual performance.

This is the real risk. Reduced visibility can affect sales over time, but more importantly, it can erode confidence in the medium itself.

Magazine advertising effectiveness and magazine visibility are not the same thing. Yet the industry increasingly treats them as if they are. If magazines fade from view, the danger is not only fewer sales, but a loss of confidence in a medium that continues to work.



Save the date: WPCF 2026 Congress in Seoul

The global printing and graphic communications community will gather in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 18–21 August 2026 for the World Print & Communication Forum (WPCF) Congress, held alongside K-PRINT WEEK at the KINTEX Exhibition Center II. Hosted by the Korean Printers Association, the event will bring together industry leaders, associations, and experts from over 40 countries under the theme “The Future of Printing Culture in the Age of AI.”

The programme will combine high-level conference sessions, exhibition visits, technical site tours, and cultural experiences. Key discussions will focus on artificial intelligence in printing, digital transformation, sustainability, and evolving market demands. Delegates will also explore Korea’s advanced printing facilities and innovative technologies showcased at K-PRINT WEEK.

WPCF 2026 will serve as a major platform for international exchange and collaboration, offering valuable insights into the future of the sector while strengthening global industry connections. Participants are invited to save the date and join this important gathering in Seoul. For attending and further information please contact Peter Park at the Korean Printers Association at kkpark1979@gmail.com.

EVENTS

- Print Matters 2026 conference, 5 June 2026, Budapest, Hungary. Intergraf's upcoming events are [here](#).
- Intergraf Currency+Identity 2026 Conference. Copenhagen, Denmark. More info [here](#).

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