

# CONNECTED

VISUAL MEDIA ALLIANCE

SPRING 2024



## Breaking Ground with Fresh Tech and Ventures

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Visual Media Alliance is non-profit trade association serving Northern California printers, packaging, label makers, and design agency and other small business owners. By providing events, education, discounts, advocacy, industry promotion and insurance programs, we help our member firms become more successful and profitable.

## ON THE COVER

Customized labels on wine bottles at the Wine Packaging Innovation Summit.

# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Valued Member,

AI and new technologies seem to be cropping up everywhere and every day, and it's no fleeting trend. Whether you're in design, marketing, sales, or operations, VMA is on the ball, ensuring our members grasp the implications for their businesses.

Last month, our Head of Marketing & Communications, Sonali Shah, hosted a Collective Conversations workshop on "Saving Time with Marketing AI," providing practical AI applications for our members. The rave reviews that followed from our members underscored the value of this initiative.

Another instance of AI's everyday integration is demonstrated on the cover of our recent *Visual Media Guide*. Kathy Amaral, one of our contract designers, utilized a combination of Adobe Firefly generative AI and Photoshop to transform a traditional woodblock type set image into a visually striking final design.

Toney Tarpey, COO of SmartSoft Inc., publishers of PressWise MIS and workflow software, penned an insightful article for this edition of *Connected* magazine. His piece surveys the numerous benefits of employing AI tools across all departments of a print manufacturing business.

In fact, this issue of *Connected* showcases member companies and vendors that are new to the industry, providing new services or products, and/or using innovative technology.

Additionally, this spring, we've had several fantastic events, including networking ConnectUps hosted at our member shops, Corefact in San Leandro and On Line Bindery in Richmond. Be sure to peruse the captivating snapshots capturing moments from these gatherings in the VMA Insider pages of this issue, as well as online on our Smugmug platform. <https://bit.ly/3WPPHCJ>

And don't miss out on registering for our upcoming inaugural VMA Baseball networking event this summer. We can't wait to see you there!

We stand at the cusp of a seismic shift in how we operate and exist. VMA is committed to walking alongside you throughout this journey.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me anytime.



Sincerely,

*Ian Flynn*

Ian Flynn  
VMA President



**"Innovation is the ability to see change as an opportunity – not a threat."**

– Steve Jobs



## Networking Event at Corefact in San Leandro

In March, we had a ConnectUp Networking event at member Corefact's facility in San Leandro. We toured their brand new fully-integrated design, print, and production studio and saw cool new advanced technology like the Xerox Iridesse that offers 4C + metallics, and others.

It was a wonderful opportunity to network with industry professionals to connect, share, and collaborate on future projects together.



Check out upcoming ConnectUp events held around the Northern California area. We host regional networking and educational events for printers and creative business owners, to make it convenient to attend. [visualmediaalliance.org/connectup](https://visualmediaalliance.org/connectup)



## ConnectUp at On Line Bindery, Richmond

It's always a good time at the On Line Bindery facility in Richmond. This time around, we received a behind-the-scenes preview of the latest technology for finishing, such as embossing, die-cutting, glue, flood UV, and film laminating at their state-of-the-art bindery and finishing shop. Plus, we enjoyed food, drinks, and two live music bands!

It's so much fun to network and share with friends and colleagues. Check out upcoming ConnectUps at [visualmediaalliance.org/connectup](https://visualmediaalliance.org/connectup). See more photos of these events at <https://bit.ly/3WPPHCJ>.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

View all upcoming events at [visualmediaalliance.org/upcoming-events](https://visualmediaalliance.org/upcoming-events).

### Join Us at Our Inaugural Baseball Networking Event

Step up to the plate and knock your networking out of the park at our inaugural VMA Baseball Networking Event!

Join us on June 20 at Sutter Health Park in Sacramento for an unforgettable day of baseball, networking, and fun in the sun.

Come cheer on the Sacramento River Cats, an AAA-affiliate of the San Francisco Giants as they take on the Round Rock Express, an AAA-affiliate of the Texas Rangers. Whether you're a die-hard baseball fan or just looking to connect with fellow professionals in a relaxed setting, this event promises to be a home run.

Special thanks to our beverage sponsor, On Line Bindery, and our food sponsor, LPP!

Grab your glove, your business cards, and your enthusiasm, and join us at the ballpark.

Register by emailing [shannon@visualmediaalliance.org](mailto:shannon@visualmediaalliance.org).



## VMA & drupa 2024: Bridging Innovation

Get ready to dive into the forefront of print and digital innovation at our upcoming drupa 2024 Collective Conversations event!

This May, the world's largest print and digital convention, drupa, made its highly anticipated return in Düsseldorf, Germany. Showcasing the latest advancements in multichannel and dialogue marketing, drupa 2024 brought together industry leaders and innovators from around the globe.

As part of our commitment to supporting the next generation of printing professionals, VMA's Guy and Louise Scholarship Fund sponsored the attendance of six students and two instructors from Cal Poly at this exciting event. These individuals had the opportunity to immerse themselves in the latest trends, technologies, and developments shaping the future of the printing industry.

We brought the insights and inspiration from drupa 2024 back home at our Collective Conversations event. On June 18th we sat down with the students who attended drupa to hear their perspectives, experiences, and takeaways from this pivotal event. This was an engaging discussion revealing valuable insights, and exploring the exciting possibilities that lie ahead for the printing industry.



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



### 4U Media Displays

4U Media & Displays is a professional supplier for the commercial large format and t-shirt printing industry. Their products include inkjet printing materials, display hardware, and t-shirt printing materials for screen printing, embroidery, and DTF. They also provide a DTF printing service for customer designs.

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### Ricoh USA

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925-463-9660  
[studioblueonline.com](http://studioblueonline.com)

# MEMBER NEWS

## Copa Design Shines: Wins Award at GDUSA's 60th Anniversary Showcase

Copa Design excels at Graphic Design USA's (GDUSA) 60th Anniversary Showcase, clinching the prestigious "Best Catalog Design" award.

This accolade underscores Copa's dedication to top-tier graphic and visual identity design. GDUSA's event unites talents nationwide, and Copa's victory reflects their ability to craft compelling visual narratives, showcased through their collaboration with Twenty20 Mendocino. Led by Art Director Lucas Souza, Copa's success highlights their collaborative spirit and commitment to excellence. [copa.design](https://copa.design).



Copa Art Director Lucas Souza



From left: Bryan Moquin, business development manager; Marcio Ribeiro, general manager; Danny Robertson, production manager; and Jayro Molina, finishing department manager stand with the company's newly installed Speedmaster XL 106 from Heidelberg.

## Moquin Press Installs Cutting-Edge Press

Moquin Press, a leading print and packaging provider in the Bay Area, elevates its capabilities with the installation of Heidelberg's groundbreaking Speedmaster XL 106.

This cutting-edge press, the first of its kind in the United States, boasts a remarkable speed of 21,000 sheets per hour and is specially tailored for label production. Equipped with state-of-the-art Prinect Inpress Control and CutStar inline sheeter, the XL 106 has significantly bolstered Moquin Press's label output by 18%, while also contributing to the company's sustainability initiatives.

This milestone reflects Moquin Press's commitment to embracing innovative technology and leading the way in the packaging industry. [moquinpress.com](https://moquinpress.com)

## Canon Unveils Next-Gen Presses for Enhanced Productivity

In March, Canon U.S.A. Inc. introduces two new models, the ColorStream 8110 and 8200, expanding its series of high-speed inkjet presses.

Designed for print service providers (PSPs), these new models offer increased productivity and flexibility. The ColorStream 8200, boasting a maximum speed of 656 feet per minute, leads the series, while the ColorStream 8110 provides an alternative option at 361 feet per minute.

Both models feature native 1200 DPI printheads and highly pigmented water-based polymer inks, ensuring exceptional print quality on various paper types. Canon continues on its commitment to sustainability with durable components and automation features for enhanced productivity and reduced environmental impact. [usa.canon.com](https://usa.canon.com)



Canon has expanded the ColorStream 8000 series with two new models, the ColorStream 8200 and 8110.



Landa S11 and Landa S11P

## Landa Introduces Advanced Press Models for Performance & Versatility

Landa Digital Printing announces the launch of its latest B1 digital print technology, the Landa S11 and S11P Nanographic Printing® Presses.

These new models offer enhanced production versatility and reach speeds of up to 11,200 SPH, driving superior economics for customers seeking increased productivity and reduced turnaround times. The addition of the new PrintAI module further enhances print quality using artificial intelligence technology, catering to demanding folding cartons and commercial print applications.

[landanano.com](https://landanano.com)

## RRD Expands Label Capacity to Meet eCommerce Demands

RRD announces the expansion of its label production capacity, installing four new presses across its U.S. facilities. These presses, operational by midyear 2024, enhance efficiency and flexibility, catering to clients' diverse needs.

The expansion aligns with the booming ecommerce market, with revenue projected to grow by 51% in the U.S. between 2024 and 2029. Lisa Pruet, president of the Packaging and Labels Segment at RRD, highlights the importance of speed to market and product quality.

Additionally, RRD is launching a label quality lab, operational by early May 2024, offering comprehensive testing procedures to ensure high-quality label solutions. For more information, visit [rrd.com/services/packaging/labels](https://rrd.com/services/packaging/labels).





# Protect Your Business From Cyberattack

Cyberattacks are growing in both frequency and severity, particularly against small businesses.



Industry experts estimate that cybersecurity incidents will cost businesses more than \$5 trillion within the next five years alone.<sup>1</sup>

The average cost of a cyberattack has exploded from \$34,000 to just under \$200,000 per single incident.<sup>2</sup>

The average downtime a company experiences after a ransomware attack is 21 days.<sup>2</sup>

The good news is using artificial intelligence can help balance exposure with appropriate coverage.<sup>2</sup>

VMA Insurance Services has partnered with Cowbell, an insurer of cyber risk that uses just this type of AI to protect small businesses!

**Get peace of mind from cyber risk for as low as \$400 per year for \$250,000 worth of coverage.<sup>3</sup>**

Additionally, should a situation arise, cyber insurance can help your business recover quickly by bringing expert services to help you after a cyberattack.



Contact Shannon at 415-710-0568 or [shannon@vma.bz](mailto:shannon@vma.bz) for more information to protect your business.

1: Hiscox's Cyber Readiness Report 2019 2: Cowbell 3: Amount varies based on specifics.

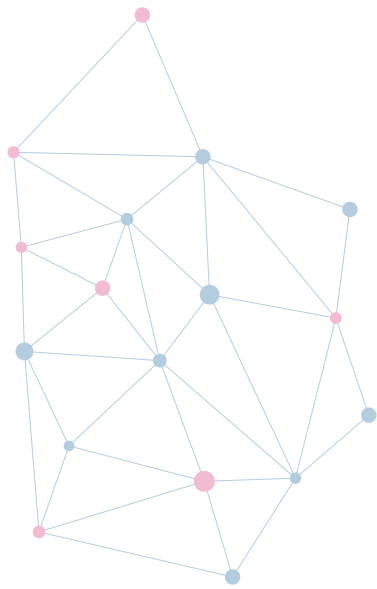
# Customizable is Shaping the Next Generation of Print

BY REVA HARRIS

For Ryan Casey, printing is more than a profession — it's a family tradition passed down through generations. As a fifth-generation printer, his family has been a part of the industry's evolution for more than a century. Today, he's keeping the family tradition going with his label printing company, Customizable, which opened its doors in November 2023.



Ryan Casey of Customizable gives presentation at Wine Packaging Innovation Summit



## From cutting grass to cutting-edge tech

Casey started out as the assistant landscaper at the family business, Casey Printing. “Eventually I worked hard enough to get to work inside, which was really nice,” he says. Casey was exposed to every aspect of running a print business, from providing customer service to applying ink to a substrate. He went on to study graphic communications at CalPoly, and worked at HP and Esko after college. Those experiences taught him about packaging and its connection to the buying experience.

“I really fell in love with the idea of making something that was an integral part of a product that people buy, and understanding the psychology of the moments of truth, which are the steps we go through as consumers when we are making a purchasing decision,” says Casey.

After returning to the family business for a while, he decided to launch a new label company. He

began looking for investors and found a partner that shared his vision for modernizing the way print operates. By using tools like online ordering, tracking, and status updates, “we could employ technology and automation to reduce the amount of human touches that take place between a designer's brain and a physical product that we ship out the door.”



Digicon at Customizable facility

## Technology is an asset, not a threat

While some print shops worry that online processes will threaten their ability to generate revenue, Casey has fully embraced technology. “AI and e-commerce are our friends a lot more than our enemies,” he notes. He invested in a high-quality, modern website, as well as a team of developers who constantly improve it so that clients can do more online. On the backend, the Customizable team uses website activity data to inform decision-making for marketing and other operational enhancements.

They're also taking full advantage of automation. “We use AI every day. We use digital marketing every day. And we see it as a huge benefit to our business.” For instance, he used ChatGPT to suggest ideas and write a script to automate the creation of dielines in Adobe Illustrator. Without the script, he would have had to create dozens of templates manually.

He's also using AI for content creation. “For someone like me who enjoys writing, but doesn't have a ton of time to write, I can have a first draft written by AI, then I can massage it and make it how I want it, which is really handy for everything from blog posts to emails,” Casey explains.

## Providing service that goes beyond “good enough”

Along with technology-driven processes, Customizable differentiates itself by delivering high-end service to small businesses. Casey noticed there was gap in the market for small



businesses that wanted quality service that was more than “good-enough.” “There’s a lot of small brands that want nice stuff. They want good customer service. They want fast turnarounds. They don’t want their press time to get bumped away from them.”

Technology enables Customizable to offer higher levels of service by reducing common bottlenecks and inefficiencies. But it’s also important to take a consultative, hands-on approach with each customer.

“We use tools like 3D visualization to help people see the impact of different choices they might make, in conjunction with their designer, to create something that’s unique and fits them,” Casey says. “We try to have an agency mindset, combined with the expertise of a manufacturer.” When customers can go to the Customizable team for print services and guidance, they’re more likely to view them as a valuable resource, not just a commodity.



Studio rendering of bottles

## Establishing a community of customers

As a newcomer, establishing yourself in the community is essential. With the company being in Paso Robles, building relationships with wineries was a no-brainer. “I saw a lot of opportunity in the Northern San Luis Obispo County and loved the business community here,” he says.

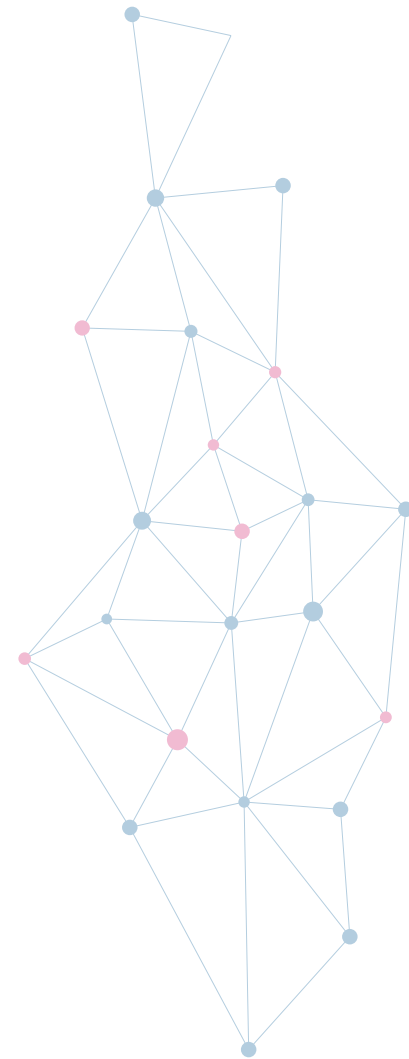
To spread the word about Customizable to the local community, they hosted a “Wine Packaging Innovation Summit.” Prospects came and enjoyed breakfast, a panel discussion led by well-known wine podcast host Adam Montiel, and received a

personalized bottle of wine with their photo on it. “I’ve always been a fan of educational marketing,” says Casey. I think if you can provide learning opportunities for customers, you build trust. Customers would rather work with someone who can be a resource to them than an order taker.”

With the expertise and industry knowledge of Jamil Bouchareb, one of his partners at Customizable, Casey also intends to produce customized packaging for a range of food and hospitality clients.

## The future is customizable

In the future, Casey plans to use even more technology to improve the agility of Customizable and its customers. With digital print technologies, they can print smaller batches, respond quickly to things like marketing trends and ingredient changes, and regulatory changes, ultimately reducing the waste that is common in packaging production. “If we can pull it off, we’ll have the scale and the partnerships to grow beyond California and become a bigger player in the world of label and packaging,” Casey notes.



“We use AI every day. We use digital marketing every day. And we see it as a huge benefit to our business.”



Wine Packaging Innovation Summit

# Landa Digital Printing: Driving Major Innovation with Microscopic Droplets of Ink

BY REVA HARRIS

When you think of nanotechnology, what comes to mind? The futuristic technology is most often associated with science-fiction and superhero movies. But an innovative team of researchers is bringing the principles of nanotechnology to the world of print. With Nanography® Landa Digital Printing is pushing new boundaries in digital printing. This innovative print tech is helping printers improve quality and speed while reducing costs and waste.

Here's how Landa is driving massive change with tiny drops of ink.

## A legacy of innovation

As the brainchild of print pioneer Benny Landa, Nanography is part of a long legacy of print innovation. Landa started in his father's photo lab and joined the print industry professionally in the 1970s. Today, he holds more than 1,000 patents.

He and a colleague founded micrographics firm Imtec, where Landa invented the company's core imaging technology. Landa then revolutionized print when his company, Indigo Digital Press, introduced the E-Print 1000, which was the first digital offset color printing press.

Indigo was later sold to HP, and Landa has gone on to form other innovative businesses. Landa Labs is the incubator for these new technologies, inside and outside of the print industry. "Landa Labs has made significant strides in alternative energy and nanotechnology, as well as investing in promising startups," says Amir Shalev, market development director.

Nanography is one of the innovations borne out of Landa Labs, and today it's the primary focus of Landa Digital Printing. "Our strategy revolves around our unique technology, serving globally recognized customers like Quad, WestRock, and MM Packaging," says Shalev.

## How Nanography works

Nanography uses a proprietary ink called NanoInk®. Landa Labs researchers discovered that these ultra-small droplets of ink could produce dots that were sharper and more uniform than traditional inks. The results were consistent on both coated and uncoated surfaces, meaning they could print on glossy and matte paper, as well as plastic, with reliable quality. The size and consistency of the ink droplets allows Nanography to produce a wider variety of colors as well.

With Nanographic Printing®, "The ink is jetted onto a heated moving blanket, creating an ultra-thin ink film," says Shalev.

"As the ink film forms, the water evaporates, leaving only the nanoscale pigment particles behind. The blanket then transfers the image onto the desired material."

The dry image can be transferred to any substrate. It produces sharper, more vibrant images and designs, and it's a cost-effective option for medium-run projects. That versatility and quality makes Nanography appealing to a wide user base. Landa's customers include marketing service providers, commercial and on-line printers, and folding carton converters from around the world. "They use Nanography to produce a wide array of applications, such as calendars, brochures, point of purchase posters, and packaging for diverse end uses," explains Shalev.

In addition to the quality and cost benefits, Nanography also supports sustainability. The ink is water-based and requires less pigment. Since the process can be used for shorter runs, printers can produce exactly what their customers need, with no waste.





## Finding and staying connected to customers

Even though Landa has an established name in the industry, the team is constantly making sure that print consumers know about Nanography. “We still leverage a mix of strategies, including showcasing Landa technology at industry trade shows, engaging directly with key customers, and collaborating with partners,” says Shalev.

To stay tapped into what customers need, the Landa team prioritizes customer relationships. They work hands-on with customers to ensure that their technology is working for them. “It’s about tailoring solutions, from technical configuration to supporting compliance needs in diverse markets,” Shalev explains. Making sure that customers leverage the full capabilities of Nanography is a win-win. Landa’s customers can get reliable print quality and maximize return on their investment while also improving sustainability. And the company benefits from stickier customer relationships.

## Driving next-gen printing forward

Continuous innovation is key to Landa’s business strategy. Shalev says, “We recently announced new models, the S11 and S11P, boosting speed and integrating AI for enhanced image quality.” The new models can transfer dry ink from the blanket to the media at higher speeds. They’re also customizable – for example, you can choose between four or seven different colors.

With Landa’s reputation for being on the cutting edge, it’s no surprise that it is exploring ways to incorporate AI into its technology. The company is currently patenting its Print AI technology, which is a module that can be added to its presses to automatically detect defects in images.

“Using this analysis, the AI provides feedback to the print engine, enabling corrections before any imperfections become visible. This iterative process allows the system to refine its analysis over time, continuously improving print quality and consistency,” explains Shalev.

## Solving problems of today and tomorrow

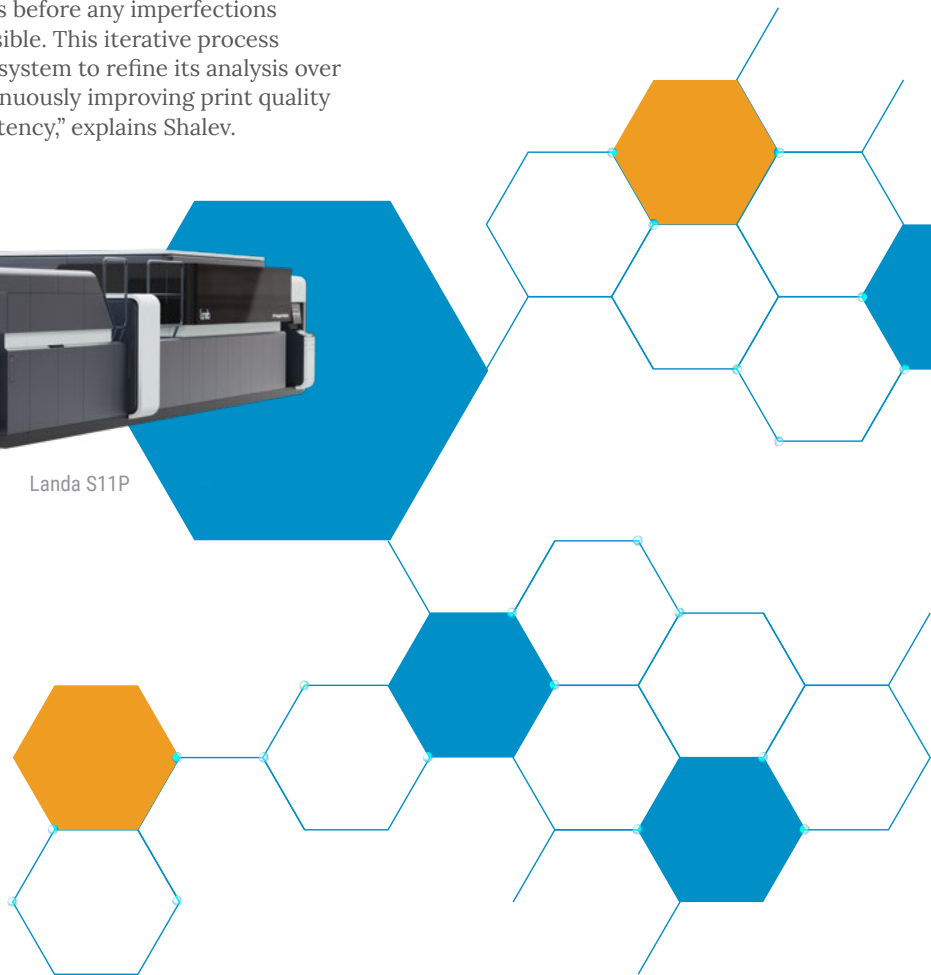
The print industry is facing challenges around sustainability, staffing pressures, and the need for greater customization. For the team at Landa, continuous innovation is the solution to tackling these complex challenges. The company is constantly seeking out new markets and applications for Nanographic Printing.

“Landa envisions a future where Nanographic Printing is broadly adopted across the print industry,” Shalev says. “Our goal is to drive innovation, enabling superior results, flexibility, and sustainability for customers worldwide.”



Landa S11P

“Our strategy revolves around our unique technology, serving globally recognized customers...”



# After Years of Practice, Print2Fly is Ready to Soar

BY REVA HARRIS

When you launch a new brand position to a new market, it can feel like a fresh start, even when you have decades of experience. That's the story of Print2Fly. It may be a new name in the industry, but it's backed by a decades-old print business. Here's the story of how Print2Fly is embracing future-forward tech and old-school values to carve out its own lane.

## It started with OD Signs

Print2Fly is the brainchild of Kin So, owner of OD Signs. OD Signs has been in the Bay Area for 30 years, mainly focusing on decals, stickers, and vehicle graphics for customers in the automotive, advertising, and promotional sectors. A decade ago, So started exploring new services to offer and new industries to serve.

The customer base grew, and so did the company's capabilities. Some of the most rewarding opportunities came from supermarket chains that wanted large posters and indoor signage. As a result, OD Signs invested in larger format printing, which quickly became a key source of revenue.

In the last few years, the company has taken a more proactive approach to promoting these new services. Making the pivot to a new way of doing business warranted a new brand. That's when Print2Fly was born.

## New services, new tech

Investing in new technology is central to Print2Fly's strategy. "With such growth, we have simultaneously brought in super wide format printers and technology to strengthen our position as a 'newbie' in the printing industry," says Philberta Chui, co-owner and marketing manager. To fulfill demand for trade show graphics, banners, outdoor concert backdrops, and political signs, Print2Fly has invested in super wide format printers that can print up to 120 inches.

UV solvents enable them to operate more efficiently and cost-effectively. "They enhance efficiency when compared to traditional methods of printing, which is to print on stickers, mount them on boards, and then laminate them," says Chui. UV solvents can also be printed directly on various materials, including fabric, saving time and reducing waste.

*"As much as we enjoy the blossoming of all these technologies, I think that people still like having face-to-face conversations."*

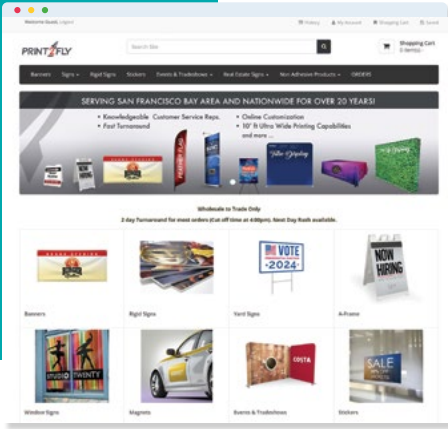


Print2fly material sample box



EV charging street sign





Print2Fly website customer login view

To improve quality, Print2Fly also uses cutting-edge printhead technology with variable dot sizes. Without the latest technologies, things like skin tones are challenging to print. “There are some colors that are always off no matter what you print. But now, UV technology allows us to have that fineness of the color and then the printheads reduce pixelation,” says Chui, so Print2Fly can print accurate large-format images of diverse people.

### Zeroing in on process efficiencies

Print2Fly’s tech investments don’t stop with print. To live up to the company’s reputation for fast, high-quality turnarounds, the leadership team also invested in digital ordering and customer support tools.

It’s a part of a broader strategy to deliver high-quality work in short timeframes. Print2Fly promises a two-day turnaround for most orders. Having the technology to deliver on that promise is a key differentiator.

The customer portal is a key part of that tech stack because the entire order process can be done online. “Once a customer has a login, they can order online, upload their files, and confirm payments,” says Chui. Customers can also use live chat to get support.

### Old-school service still matters

Of course, some customers still prefer the traditional approach to service, and Print2Fly caters to their needs. Chui says, “Old-school clients still like to hear your voice no matter what.”

Even the best technology can’t replace good relationships. Print2Fly takes a proactive approach to keeping in touch with customers and prospects. The leadership team regularly sets aside time to have lunch with customers and to canvas for new ones. It’s all about finding the balance between technology and personal interaction. “As much as we enjoy the blossoming of all these technologies, I think that people still like having face-to-face conversations.”

That doesn’t mean the Print2Fly team doesn’t gently encourage these technology holdouts to use digital tools as well. “We also focus on educating those who prefer traditional methods. It’s crucial for us to help customers realize and embrace the smoothness of the online ordering process,” Chui says.

### What’s next for Print2Fly?

With a relationship-driven approach to service, and the ability to deliver high-quality services at speed, Print2Fly is already differentiating itself to its customer base. Chui points out that, even when customers try working with another vendor, they often return. “People come back because they know we can deliver.”

So, what’s next? Technology will continue to be a key asset in the next phase of Print2Fly’s growth. “This year, we are



Tesla egg, bunny, and poster

trying to focus on automation like robotics to make things efficient and safe for our employees,” says Chui. For example, robotic arms can be used to lift heavy objects, such as boards that are mounted on metal die bonds.

They’re also exploring using technology to help fill labor gaps. “We plan to streamline our artwork and production processes to enhance production speed.”

There’s an underlying thread to every tech investment, new workflow, or customer lunch date: Print2Fly’s core values.

“In our business delivery, we adhere to the triangle of success — cost, efficiency, and quality — factors we never compromise on,” Chui says. The company may be evolving in new ways, but some things will never change.



Real estate signs - print in progress



## THE ADVANCE OF AI FOR THE PRINT INDUSTRY

TONY TARPEY, COO, SMARTSOFT INC.

The term Artificial Intelligence, or AI, conjures up images from science fiction movies – a brave new world full of promise, and fear.

From the sentient power of HAL in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, to the "Robots Gone Wild" menace of the Terminator movies, there's a nagging sense that perhaps mankind is plotting its own downfall in its pursuit of AI. But until that fateful day when Arnie comes back to save us all, how might AI impact not just mankind, but more importantly, the print industry? Here are just a few ways.

**Creative/Prepress** – We're already seeing dozens of tools such as Adobe Firefly, DALL-E, DreamStudio, and ChatGPT being used to streamline the content creation process. AI-powered image processing tools such as Photo AI from Topaz Labs can optimize color accuracy and image sharpness. As more tools hit the market, more of what you print will be created with the help of AI.

**Sales** – Tools such as Clay, Regie.ai, and Lift AI can help refine your sales prospecting by personalizing content targeted to those most likely to buy. AI tools will be used to analyze customer order history patterns, optimizing customer reorder outreach.

**Customer Service** – AI virtual assistants and chatbots such as Help Scout or Tidio are transforming the customer service experience, assisting customers with questions, ordering, and troubleshooting.

**Production** – AI-powered automation can help maximize production efficiency through scheduling and resource allocation based on multiple parameters; real-time inventory management; and ordering, job tracking, and machine performance monitoring.

There are more ways that AI technology will impact your print business than I have enough space to list here – such as employee training, quality control, supply chain management, shipping, and printer maintenance, to name but a few.

In this brave new world, let's lean in to take advantage of some of the incredible new tools being developed – and as a print software vendor, we are looking at ways that AI can enhance our own platform. Until the day that your HP Indigo locks your print shop's doors and refuses to let you leave until you have whipped it up a steaming fresh latte, go all in and gain the benefit of innovation.

Tony Tarpey is the COO at SmartSoft Inc., the company behind the award-winning Print MIS and workflow automation platform, PressWise. Designed by a printer, PressWise provides a cloud-based solution that includes web storefronts, estimating, order management, production automation, bulk mailing, shipping, and fulfillment. Contact Tony at [tonyt@smartssoftusa.com](mailto:tonyt@smartssoftusa.com).



## WHAT'S NEW WITH CANON!

RUSTY DAVIS, SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE, CANNON PRODUCTION PRINTING SYSTEMS

2024 is quite an exciting year with drupa, Printing United, thINK Ahead, and many more industry events. "New" seems to be the buzzword for 2024, but at Canon, "new" is a part of the culture. Innovation at Canon is a core function of our company culture. We innovate with new and exciting technologies, like the CE-SAT-IE satellite, but we also innovate with our existing platforms, allowing existing customers to get the "new" technology while leveraging their initial investment.

The ProStream and ColorStream families continue to lead the industry. The ColorStream family, originally launched in 2011, continues to drive more pages than any other platform, especially the new ColorStream 8200, with 656 feet per minute or more than 85,000 letter sheets per minute. The ProStream, originally launched in 2017, is leading the way in commercial and specialty print spaces, especially photo and high-quality direct mail spaces. The expanding family includes the new ProStream 2000 and the new flagship, the ProStream 3160. The ProStream 3160 enables print

providers to produce 12pt. C2S postcards at a blazing 61,000 postcards (6x9 with bleeds) per hour as well as 50# letters at 525 feet per minute or over 68,000 letters per hour.

After 38 years of Top 5 patent awards, "new" is a way of life at Canon. With drupa around the corner and Printing United returning to Las Vegas, there is plenty more to "new" to show! (It's fitting that the first image received back from Canon's first satellite is of the Las Vegas strip and convention center!)

But what is truly NEW is the announcement of the new markets and options that will be available to Canon customers! Canon announced the single pass digital corrugated press (to be named in the near future), the LabelStream 2000, and the Canon Edale FL5 carton production line. Now you can photograph, print, box, wrap, label, and more, all with Canon technology!



ColorStream 8200

Rusty Davis is the Senior Account Executive for Canon's Production Printing Systems, the division solely responsible for production inkjet systems. Davis has more than 23 years of sales and marketing experience with Canon and Océ Technologies, working on both coasts and multiple roles throughout his career, but it all started at University of San Diego, driving a golf cart for the University Print Shop (Océ customer!).  
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# Congratulations to the 2024 VMA Student Scholarship Winners!

Visual Media Alliance offers graphic arts scholarships to attract new talent to our industry and improve the skills of our existing workforce.

Scholarships funds are provided by the Guy and Louise Condrott Scholarship Fund Inc.

This year alone, we've awarded \$25,000 in scholarships.

## 2024 Scholarship Winners

Name	Major	School
Ben Cardova	Graphic Design	California College of the Arts
Tiffanie Ciprian	Graphic Design	Chatbot College
Katelyn Coffman	Graphic Design	Fresno State University
Dorothy Cunturso	Graphic Design	City College of San Francisco
Joel Cornejo Diaz	Graphic Design	California State University, East Bay
Erin Gottis	Studio Arts	California State University, Sacramento
Yijun He	Graphic Design	College of San Mateo
Shoshana Kurland	Graphic Design	College of San Mateo
Kasey Martinez	Graphic Design BFA	California State University, East Bay
Anna Milogorodskaya	Graphic Production	College of San Mateo
Isabelle Mitter	Graphic Design	California College of the Arts
Samuel Moore	Graphic Communication	California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo
Nikole Ahne Morales	Graphic Design	Chatbot College
Cristina Perazone	Visual Communication Design	San Francisco State University
Jessica Poon	BFA Concentration in Graphic Design	California State University, East Bay
Michel Ramírez Reynoso	Graphic Design	Chatbot-Las Positas Community College District
ClarizeYale Revadavia	Digital Illustration	City College of San Francisco
Tamanna Shirol	Industrial Design	San Francisco State University
Ngan To	Interior Design & Industrial Design	San Francisco State University
Jacob Topete	Graphic Design	San Jose State University
Trista Wang	Graphic Communication	California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo
Sarida Wattanapruksa	Art, Graphic Design	California State University, East Bay
JenniferWu	Visual Media Design	City College of San Francisco
Zhuoying Yu	Graphic Design	College of San Mateo
Ling Zhou	Visual Communication Design	San Francisco State University

For more information visit [visualmediaalliance.org/education/scholarships](https://visualmediaalliance.org/education/scholarships).

To make a contribution to the fund, contact [ian@visualmediaalliance.org](mailto:ian@visualmediaalliance.org).



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**Call today and benefit from  
the "power in numbers."**



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