

drupa Essentials of Print



We deliver herewith a series a series of articles, from designers, brand owners, printers, converters, journalists and influencers. We look forward to working together with experts, who enrich our drupa Essentials with fresh impulses, sound expertise and remarkable experience. All these articles will allow visitors to understand a world that has changed dramatically since the creation of drupa in 1951 and will continue to evolve. Different observations and perceptions of an industry seeking innovation in a fast-changing world. Give free rein to your instinct under the adage: "to each his own drupa".

We are happy to provide you with this expert article and we would be pleased if you publish it.

BE INSPIRED! _____

Good reading.

Sabine Geldermann & Team

Deborah Corn - The myth of the global print network.



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Deborah Corn is the Intergalactic Ambassador to The Printerverse at Print Media Centr, a Print Buyerologist, international speaker and blogger, host of Podcasts From The Printerverse, cultivator of Print Production Professionals the #1 print group on LinkedIn, Head Girl in Charge at Girls Who Print, host of #PrintChat every Wednesday at 4PM ET on Twitter, the founder of International Print Day and the founder of #ProjectPeacock. She is the recipient of several industry honours including the 2016 Girls Who Print Girlie Award and the 2017 Clemson University Top Cat Award, and sits on the boards of the Advertising Production Club

of NYC and The Magazine Innovation Center at the University of Mississippi.

Deborah has 25+ years of experience working in advertising as a Print Producer. She currently provides printspiration and resources to print and marketing professionals through Print Media Center, and works behind the scenes with printers, suppliers and industry organizations helping them create meaningful relationships with customers and achieve success with their social media and content marketing endeavours.

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**drupa
content
contributor**



Deborah Corn - The myth of the global print network.

I travel to many events as your self-appointed Intergalactic Ambassador! I have started to discern a pattern in the talk-tracks regarding the formation of an independent global print network, based on the foundation that all members are owners of the same print technology.

In theory, this idea is not impossible to achieve. All you need is a group of printers with the same printing technology who could collectively execute client work across countries and continents. There are already very successful printing networks out in the world who do this every day. Cimpress, who owns VistaPrint, might be the best known, but they are not alone. Gelato, Cloudprinter, HappyPrinting and others also have networks of printers who fulfil work around the world.

In theory, those printers who band together to create a network can offer their clients more services in more locations. They could help their clients in unique ways on local levels - have you ever tried to have an anecdote or expression translated? It doesn't always work out. Neither does cost-effective shipping across oceans. Between shipping interruptions and the havoc caused by customs-delays, delivering worldwide can be angst-ridden and heart-breaking. Not to mention profit-destroying. A network that transfers files and prints locally could be a solution.

In theory, such a network of printers is a fine-tuned colour-management machine. Upon colour approval, the network can disseminate the ink settings so that what you see in Denver is what you see in Denmark... every time. In theory, the client's choice of paper/substrate (or coffee mug or t-shirt) is available to everyone in the network, anytime they need it. The same goes for finishing options: cutters, perforators, folding and inserters are all identical.

The problem with this theory is that it is based on plausibility and possibility and we all know that there is gap between theory and reality. If all the parts that need to fall into place are delivered then it works. The problem with this theory is the risk in trusting that all of those parts will fall into place every time. And, it has to be every time. The risk to a business and its reputation extends across all borders.

So, what is a girl who prints to do?

Well, the global network idea isn't crazy... and you shouldn't dismiss it.

If your goal is to expand your business, you should be looking at network options. But you may have to look at it from 30,000 feet to see where the opportunity is for your business.

Taking into consideration that the pool of print customers you have access to is more likely to be shrinking or stagnant, then looking beyond your geographical borders for business and new technology partners is a logical expansion. Those borders can surround your country or surround your neighbourhood, but regardless of the boundaries without the proper relationships you cannot achieve your expansion goals.

Manufacturers, business organizations and user groups all want to be the central point for the network creation relationship, but their vested interest in selling this concept is directly tied to selling the products, services and organization memberships needed to accomplish the goal. With all the mergers and acquisitions, as well as manufacturers playing musical partner chairs, it seems quite risky to leave relationship development in someone else's hands.

Another thing to consider, from a competition standpoint, is why a printer would want to cooperate and collaborate with many printers who have the same technology? Do they all bid on the same jobs? How does one printer get chosen over another in the same city or country? Does such cooperation become another breeding ground for bidding wars and the further commoditization of print?

I just don't see it going that way.

The more printers can stand out with unique services and opportunities for their customers, the better chance they have at winning jobs and avoiding consistent price wars with identical technology users.

Enter... drupa!

If the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, the shortest distance between you and a viable global print network is from where you are now to Messe Dusseldorf June 16-26, 2020. It is here that you can find new opportunities for your business through partners, products and services not available in your community. Opportunities to bring new printing possibilities home and win new business with technology no one else has or doesn't have yet.

drupa is the epicentre of now, next and future. Walking through all the 17 halls at the show in 2016 changed my entire perspective on the printing industry. I had no idea how much technology was out there and more importantly that it was rapidly coming onto the marketplace. drupa is focused on the future of print. Print is the future of drupa. And because of that industry-wide spotlight every four years, companies often plan their product development to ensure a launch during drupa. You can read a press release from home,

or you can be there to see it, talk to the product managers, and grab the opportunity before your competition does.

drupa is a living embodiment of global networking. There are presentations and speakers to learn from every minute of the day in every hall. There are like-minded people attending the same educational opportunities that are relevant to you. Partnerships and friendships are born at drupa.

In 2020 drupa dna (drupa next age) will launch. This space will be filled with start-ups and innovators who will present new ideas and technologies to the print world.

If you are one of these innovators, click here to apply for a space before they are all gone. www.drupa.com/dna-en

And last but not least, if you're looking for a place to meet new people from around the world, I hereby invite you to join my global network! The Printerverse is coming to drupa 2020 and will present 11 days of free education, events and panel-discussions. We have some very cool programming planned that will illustrate the power of partnership, innovation and yes... a global print network!

"dip!" becomes "dna - drupa next age"

Something new is produced by genetic reshuffling. This basic principle of evolution also holds true of technology as an unconventional synthesis of existing approaches leading to innovation. Things become particularly productive when great minds that otherwise have little in common swap ideas.

A world-leading trade fair such as drupa is the perfect meeting place - from 16 June 2020, the crème de la crème of the print and packaging industry will come together in Düsseldorf. To bring the right experts together, we are setting up a new special area: dna - drupa next age.

The special area dna focuses on topics of the future and stimulates the productive exchange between global players and start-ups. Building on the start-up area of the drupa innovation park (dip!) and embedded in a new hall concept, dna provides innovators from the start-up scene the opportunity to present new product ideas, services and approaches in the field of relevant cross-sectional technologies - whether in the form of best practices or business cases.

Read more at www.drupa.com/dna-en