**Are you ready for what 2023 has to offer?**

*By Eef de Ridder, Vice President, Graphic Communications, Ricoh Europe*

**Ricoh Europe, London, 16 December 2022** － As 2022 draws to a close it has proven to be another 12 months of unrelenting political and economic upheaval that presented numerous challenges for Print Service Providers (PSPs).

Many will remain key influencers in 2023.

Among the main pressure points that will continue to define the post pandemic business environment are:

* Disrupted supplies stemming from the Russia-Ukraine conflict and a recession intensified by EU sanctions on Russia shrinking economies and causing volatility in the financial markets. There is also the risk that Taiwan-China tensions could create worldwide problems while the consequences of Brexit continue to impact levels of business in the EU. Also a consideration is the polarisation possible from upcoming national elections. All have the potential to reduce business opportunities and cut trade volume and GDP. Typically print follows GDP***.***
* Rising energy prices, costs and inflation driving operational expenses up, reducing profits and affecting consumer spending. These economic factors may well lead to a consolidation of printers in certain markets and a reduction in total spending on printed communication.
* A shortage of skilled labour proving problematic for PSPs trying to remain competitive. A knowledgeable and responsive team is vital to operational performance, production capacity, and service flexibility. Artifical Intelligence and the use of robots can help automate processes for greater efficiencies. They can also help support the completion of highly responsive on demand print. This will help operations prepare for the continued expansion of online print orders that is so widely expected.

While the prevailing conditions are undoubtedly challenging, opportunities certainly do exist for nimble PSPs. And the expected growth in online print is just one of the rays of light presented by today’s circumstances.

Also an opportunity for print is its trust value which is something my colleagues Erwin Busselot discussed in this [blog](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-print-enhances-lifetime-learning-erwin-busselot/?trackingId=BLjWdR0zKJCsrbNyM4A73Q%3D%3D). With the number of active monthly social media users now at around 3.43 billion, privacy issues, fake news and irresponsible marketing, are increasingly of concern. Printed content is trusted more. As such it is increasingly being chosen to grow strong customer relationships.

Sustainability is ever more a significant consideration in print purchasing decisions, too, and plastic bans will favour paper solutions especially in packaging, labels, and greeting cards applications. Printing on demand near the customer will deliver a responsive service with limited time and travel costs.

It is these opportunities that continue to drive fast growth in digital printing. According to [Intergraf](https://www.intergraf.eu/communications/latest-news/item/188-proven-advantage-for-education-with-printed-materials)inkjet printing revenues will increase at double digital rates to E28 billion in 2026.

Digital printing technology is closing the gap (in production volume terms) with offset, encouraging more PSPs to transform their operations to make the most of the short run economics possible. It is perfectly placed to deliver fast turnaround applications flexibility and cost efficiently. It enables PSPs to deliver greater production agility to address quickly changing market demands like those mentioned here.

These are demands that will continue long into 2023 and beyond and they are demands that responsive production print hardware and software can help operations confidently tackle. Exploring how this could be possible is the core remit of Ricoh’s EDGE business development consultancy service.

As 2023 draws nearer are you as prepared as you can be to make the most of the opportunities it has to offer? Ricoh is here to help, and if you are a client, please ensure that you talk to your Account Manager to ensure that you can take advantage of the full range of support that is available, now and into the future.

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With cultivated knowledge and organizational capabilities nurtured over its 85-year history, Ricoh is a leading provider of digital services, information management, and print and imaging solutions designed to support digital transformation and optimize business performance.

Headquartered in Tokyo, Ricoh Group has major operations throughout the world and its products and services now reach customers in approximately 200 countries and regions. In the financial year ended March 2022, Ricoh Group had worldwide sales of 1,758 billion yen (approx. 14.5 billion USD).

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