

[INTRODUCTION]

**[00:00:00] DC:** It takes the right skills and the right innovation to design and manage meaningful print marketing solutions. Welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse, where we explore all facets of print and marketing that creates stellar communications and sales opportunities for business success. I'm host, Deborah Corn, the Intergalactic Ambassador to the Printerverse. Thanks for tuning in. Listen long and prosper.

[EPISODE]

**[0:00:31] DC:** Hey, everybody. Welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse. This is Deborah Corn, your Intergalactic Ambassador. I am live at drupa with the one and only, Mr. Benny Landa. Sir, every time I see you, I really am awestruck, because you're really pushing creativity to new levels with your presses, with your technology. That is something that means so much to me. So many people fighting over pennies, instead of, what can I make with this fabulous technology.

**[0:01:05] BL:** Thank you so much, Deb. I really appreciate your kind words. Yes, it's very thrilling for me, first of all, to be on your podcast. We haven't met for about eight years, so it's so great to see you again without antennas this time.

**[0:01:16] DC:** This is true. I really appreciate it. So, your booth is spectacular. You made some amazing announcements at the show, including your partnership with Gelato, which I thought was very interesting.

**[0:01:28] BL:** Yes. The Gelato relationship is really important one, because we're in a transition, we're in a transition from the old way of doing it, to the new ways. It's not limited just to getting rid of printing plates, and paper waste, and just duplicating the same image over and over again by making it digital. Then, it's also the way the customers communicate, the way they we are getting the information out.

In the old days, you would produce a pallet of paper, and you'd ship it across the country, or ship it to some distance. But in today's era of instant information, it doesn't make any sense to

ship printing from one side of the world to the other, from one country to the other. Even from one state to the other. So, to connect our network of customers today, we have 60 presses installed and we're doubling our numbers every year.

**[0:02:22] DC:** You're doubling them in your booth today, as a matter of fact.

**[0:02:25] BL:** That's right. It's clear that the printing industry now, finally, after all these years really is now becoming digital. I'm thrilled really to my bones, that it appears that we are taking the forefront of that transition. But it's more than just a transition of how you get the ink onto the paper. It's, how does the customer know about you? How do they know about the power of digital printing? How do the McDonald's, and the car dealerships, and the Walmarts, how do the local business people know what digital printing can do for them?

That connectivity can be affected by Gelato. Their concept of, what do they call it, the grand metro, not the grand metro. The mega metro or something like that, where rather than shipping goods from one part of the world to the other. The producers such as Landa Press owners can service their immediate environment because the world is immediate. Because with ecommerce and digital media, we live in an on-demand world. On-demand means now. I need it not days from now. I want it now. That means, close, next door.

Just as Amazon is doing with deliveries. Print service providers have to do it with their product. So, this connection, all of our customers are going to be connected digitally. Because the technology can now give you precise, exact same results no matter what press it's delivered on. No, that's not possible with mechanical printing, that's not possible with most digital printing. But now, especially with this AI model that we have in the product, we close the loop and have a very precise output. So that every Walmart in the world, every chain, every McDonald's, Audi, their colors of their cars, of their brochures, of their hamburgers, if their product can be exact, precise no matter where they're produced around the world. Now, Gelato helps us create this network and connects us to the customers who need these jobs and make them aware of it.

**[0:04:36] DC:** Do you think that – a while ago, you said that the future of print is ink on anything. I think that Gelato helps with that as well. Because if you can't produce it, you can go to the next person who might be able to hand that job, and you're giving your customers the ability to say yes to everything.

**[0:04:57] BL:** Well, you know, it's an interesting thing. There's a philosophical part of it and a social part of it. One of the things I love so much about this industry, in many industries, your competitors are your enemies. That's not the case with printing. Something about this industry makes people – the camaraderie is unbelievably there. We're taking that to the next level, in which our customers who get a job from a local car dealership. Once that car dealership understands the power of digital printing and how they can customize, and personalize the communication with their prospects or their customers. They now share this with other dealerships. Supposing I have a dealership in New Jersey, I have a dealership in California. One tells the other. But then, our customer contacts through Gelato, the connection is made, he puts up the job for this brand. Then, the California print service provider who has a Landa can produce the job for the local jobs in California. It's a collaboration rather than a competition.

**[0:06:06] DC:** Right. I also have to say that the collaboration and the tools, and the tools being your press, and what it looks like, and how it operates. The visual of it, as well as the technology, the power of the technology behind Gelato should be very enticing to young people to want to come into the printing industry. They're not seeing people running around a print shop with fumes all over the place, and people covered in ink anymore, and things of that nature. As somebody who has just really broken every glass ceiling that you've probably built to begin with, can you just speak to the students out there in the graphic communication programs who look at the printing industry and might decide that a digital marketing path is a better option for them about the real opportunity and the vision of the industry moving forward.

**[0:07:03] BL:** That's a very interesting question. It touches also one of the big challenges in the industry, which is, printing is a family business. All over the world, print shops are family shops, because they traditionally service the local community. One of the big challenges of print shop owners is the next generation, they don't want to be printers. Why? Because they see what the print shop looks like, they see that their image of somebody who's a printer is somebody who has a wrench in his pocket, wears overalls, and has rags, cleaning his hands all the time.

**[0:07:38] DC:** Stop the presses. Like in the movies, right?

**[0:07:41] BL:** Yes. With the ink under his fingernails, and they know that it takes two years of apprenticeship to be able to run a printing press. All of that is in the past. Today, printing is the

most advanced digital printing. Specifically, I would say, with our presses, which replace offset presses one-to-one, but they're entirely digital. And to run the press takes two weeks of training, you run it like, you operate it through an amazing user interface that we call the cockpit, which is like designing on a –

**[0:08:16] DC:** Yes, it looks like a giant iPad to me. That's how I describe it to people.

**[0:08:19] BL:** Exactly right. It does look like a big iPad. It's all digital. The process is entirely automatic. The operator isn't using a loop, and trying to look at the registration, and adjust things, and fix things, and clean things. The whole press is automatic, but what's powerful about this is, it's the most powerful digital communication method. I'll tell you why. Today, if you're an advertiser, you want to deliver a message. The web is so crowded. How do you get eyeballs? How do you get somebody's attention? It's almost impossible to get somebody's attention on an iPhone. But the mail in most countries is still a very important tool, and everyone gets mail every day.

When the mail comes in, yes, most of it is junk and people throw it in the garbage. But they first look at it, they first see it. When you see this mailing, and it's not just some inkjet printed name, "Hey, John. Do something." When they say, "Hey, you're a golfer and you'd love golf vacation, you see on the on the mail, it says, "Hey, John. Wouldn't you and your wife Mary love to have your next golf vacation in Hawaii. Here's a 30% discount. Why don't you plan it now?" That gets to them.

So, the response from direct mail is phenomenal. Direct mail is now unlike many other traditional commercial printing applications, like newspapers, and books is not in decline. It is skyrocketing, because the response rates are so high, the payback from direct mail, because it gets people's attention. It's almost impossible to do that with all digital media.

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**[0:10:55] DC:** There are so many other components and you touched upon it before, which is that printer is a secure communication channel. I actually clicked on an email, I can't believe I even admitting this to you, that I thought it was from my bank. The next thing I know, I'm sitting there for an hour, watching my Norton wheel spin. Because I made that my punishment that I was going to have to sit there and make sure there was no spyware or anything on my computer because I clicked a link. So, that was my punishment. As I was sitting there, I realized, had my bank sent me a QR code or something in the mail with a URL, I would not have thought twice about it. I would have just clicked it, scanned it, gone on, because it's a secure communication channel.

Print is actually the best way to start a digital relationship with people. Because now, when I get those emails, I'm like a forensic detective. Who is this from? What does the legal say? Is the font size right? Is the grammar right? Is this really who it's from? The other opportunity, especially with digital printing, is that we can act more like the digital marketers and be pragmatic with it. For example, if we look at like a home goods store, like something like a Home Depot, or Lowe's that we have in the United States. If a construction worker comes in, and first he's buying a bunch of cement, you can assume they're laying a foundation. How long does that take to dry? What is the next step of the building process? What if that construction company starts getting, "Oh, what do you know? Perfect timing. My next purchase is lumber, and here's a special offer for me to come and get it." We can utilize the craftiness of the digital marketers, and bring it into the way we can mark it through the magic of digital printing.

**[0:12:43] BL:** Absolutely. While you're talking about marketing, there's another aspect too, because we've talked about the question of whether young people would like to stay in the print industry. One serious question is job security. When I'm asked if I meet a young person, "I don't know." They say, "What do you do?" I say, "Well, I'm in printing." You know what happens?"

**[0:13:03] DC:** They feel bad for you.

**[0:13:03] BL:** Their eyes glaze over. It's like, they're saying to themselves, "Hey, grandpa. Why don't you worry about developing steam engines? Printing is dead." Because they're thinking about newspapers and books, that's only 7% of the print market. Sixty percent of the print market and growing faster than the GDP all around the world is packaging. Packaging is everything you buy in a supermarket or drugstore. It must be beautifully printed, because that's what sells the product. That is not only not declining, as I said, it's growing faster than the GDP everywhere in the world for a lot of reasons. Because of urbanization, in Asian countries, for example, where the farmer instead of buying in China, instead of buying his food in the open-air market in the village. Now, most of the city buys in the supermarkets, and of course, it has to be packaged. The shrinking size of the families around the world, more packages in any event.

Packaging is growing. As I said, it's 60% of the printing market. It's \$500 billion business and growing. The challenge of marketing and packaging, because some high percentage of decisions are made in the market based on the impression you get from the product. So, it's just exciting for young people to think, "Hey, I have a real challenge, I have a real career, and it's going to be here for a very long time."

I think there's a wonderful career paths for young people who are interested in digital or interested in the planet. There's another thing, is the planet. When we started announcing these presses and started shipping them, we didn't have a big focus on sustainability. Of course, we use water-based ink, and all that. We hadn't realized. Shame on me. But we hadn't realized until our customers told us, "Wow, there's no waste." The typical offset customers produce hundreds of tons a year of paper waste, and hundreds of thousands of metal printing. But you know, there are more metal printing plates thrown away each year than aluminum used in the entire aircraft industry worldwide, and aircraft lasts for decades. These are thrown away after one use. It's a huge environmental and economic burden.

So, the sustainability of this technology is phenomenal. That, I think really starts speaking to young people, because thank God, the next generation really does understand that we have only one planet, there's no planet B. We have to keep this one and it's our responsibility not to pollute it, not to overheat it, to live in a sustainable manner.

**[0:15:40] DC:** You're right. That becomes attractive as they want to work for companies that care about this in every way.

**[0:15:46] BL:** It is becoming an economic imperative because the brands are insistent.

**[0:15:51] DC:** Well, the governments and countries are coming for everybody now, very soon. I just heard about this crazy thing coming into the EU about paper, about the chain of custody of paper is no longer just going to be one little seal of FSC.

**[0:16:05] BL:** But I want to tell you something. It's not just in EU. We, in the West always looked at China as being the big polluter, and they're way behind us. But when it comes – once the Chinese government makes a decision, it happens in China. China today is at the cutting edge of adoption of what's going to happen tomorrow. When I was growing up, everybody said, "Everything new in the world happens first in California, then in the rest of the United States, and then the rest of the world." Well, today, it's maybe frightening for some, but I have to say, it's happening in China. In a recent visit to China, I couldn't use a credit card to pay in a restaurant.

**[0:16:38] DC:** Everything is in tap form.

**[0:16:39] BL:** Everything, yes. What do they call it, the Alipay or WeChatPay?

**[0:16:44] DC:** Oh, interesting.

**[0:16:45] BL:** They don't use money; they don't use credit cards. They only use their cell phones. You know that the city of Beijing has banned, it prohibits the installation of new offset presses, because of this sustainability. That's going to happen worldwide. Frankly, it must happen. It must. We just cannot continue the way we are. We, in Israel, have a lot of very creative companies, and some of the cutting-edge companies are working on alternatives to beef, and alternatives to milk, and there's no choice, we must go in that direction. Otherwise, we're committing suicide on the planet.

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**[0:18:01] DC:** It's why people look at – I do a presentation about just the incredible applications in the printing industry, and I actually show you a press. When I say, I'm like, "People think print is an antiquated technology." Then, I show one of your presses, and I'm like, "You work in a cockpit," to your point before. Also, that these things are really so important to everybody as moving forward. Now, just to come full circle. We started off this interview, and you said the last time you saw me, I was wearing – well, the time before, antennas. That was a long time ago. During that time, we were actually playing Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots.

**[0:18:41] BL:** And I think your hair was green.

**[0:18:43] DC:** It might have been, but we were playing Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots, I remember.

**[0:18:47] BL:** Yes, that's right.

**[0:18:48] DC:** But I had asked you at that point in time if you felt that printing was a craft or a science. I want to modify the question, because I want to be mindful of your time, and say, "Do you think that science is pushing craft now or is craft pushing science at least in Landa's mind, Mr. Landa's mind?" I can't believe I said Landa's mind. You're sitting in front of me. In your mind, sir.

**[0:19:15] BL:** Well, I can't give a general answer, because I don't know outside of what we do. I really can't give you a philosophical answer. I can tell you in our own group in the Landa Group, and Landa Digital Printing is a part of that group. We do things differently than most. Most companies are in a certain market. They identify a market need, a problem, and then they go



and say, "Okay. Now, let's try and figure out a technology that can solve that problem." We do the opposite. We develop nanomaterials, we develop deep technology. It takes us typically 10, 12, 14 years for each technological development. We develop a technology, make scientific discoveries, and then we say, "Wow, this is an amazing solution. Let's now go find what this solution can – what problem this solution can fix."

That's how [inaudible 0:20:12] started. We weren't trying to develop a new kind. On the contrary, when I sold Indigo to HP, I thought I was leaving the printing industry forever. I started Landa Labs, really, I know it sounds pretentious, but to save the planet. We were working on a low-temperature thermal energy conversion technology because that could save the planet. One of the early developments from that research was the discovery of nano pigments. We discovered them, and then I said, because I came from printing, "Hey, these could be the holy grail for printing. I have no choice; I have to go back into printing."

So, same thing happened with our – I don't know if you know. Three days ago, the Wall Street Journal broke a new story about one of our companies in the Landa Group called Lumet, that's in solar energy.

**[0:20:54] DC:** Oh, I just saw something about that, yes.

**[0:20:56] BL:** Yes. Because we have this breakthrough technology, where we could bump the efficiency significantly higher, and have some results by reducing their costs. So, we did this big deal with a big solar company. That was the scoop in the Wall Street Journal. But this is the same story that technology started 12 years ago, we had this discovery. We said, "Wow, this could be great for solar, again, to save the planet." Likewise, the companies that we try to nurture are all in that focus. So, I don't know if that answers your question. But in our case, it's backwards, but it really works well.

**[0:21:29] DC:** I think it does answer my question. I think that science is a big part of your focus, but the science in this case has created a fantastic creative result if people utilize the technology to its full capabilities. Sir, I cannot thank you more for your time today. I really appreciate it. I can't wait to see the show.

**[0:21:51] BL:** Deb, I'm honored. You are a one and only, I have to say, and I am thrilled to be interviewed by you. Thank you so much.

**[0:21:57] DC:** Thank you so much. Have a great rest of drupa.

**[0:22:00] BL:** Thank you. Bye-bye.

[END OF EPISODE]

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[END]

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drupa: <https://www.drupa.com/>

drupa Next Age (drupa DNA): [https://www.drupa.com/en/Program/Forums/drupa\\_next\\_age](https://www.drupa.com/en/Program/Forums/drupa_next_age)

Benny Landa: <https://landanano.com/about-us/benny-landa/>

Landa Digital Printing: <https://landanano.com/>

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