

[INTRODUCTION]

**[0:00:00] DC:** Today on The Print Report, we are live in hall seven at drupa DNA again.

**[0:00:06] PM:** Again, and we're going to be talking about some of the coolest ways to design your product print.

**[0:00:13] DC:** Welcome to The Print Report with Deborah Corn and Pat McGrew. All the print that's fit for news.

[EPISODE]

**[0:00:21] DC:** Hey, everybody. Welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse. This is Deborah Corn, your Intergalactic Ambassador. More specifically, we are here with The Print Report, which means, I'm here with Pat McGrew. Hello, Pat McGrew.

**[0:00:31] PM:** Hello, Deborah Corn.

**[0:00:33] DC:** It is what? Day 9, 10, 11, 12, something?

**[0:00:36] PM:** I mean, I've lost count.

**[0:00:39] DC:** I honestly have lost count as of this morning.

**[0:00:40] PM:** I forgot what day it was this morning.

**[0:00:41] DC:** I thought drupa ended a day early. As a bonus, I realized I have to be here one extra day in my head. So, but at least this time, I made the correct plane reservations, and I'm going home on the right day. So, I am really excited to welcome my long-term partners from XMPiE. I have been hanging out with them for a couple of years now because I love what they do to help printers make more money, and strengthen their relationships with customers, current ones, and open up doors to new verticals with new customers through their software tools.

Which by the way, XMPiE is the first name in personalization. Ever since I have been in print, there are about three software I can name that almost every printer on planet Earth knows, and XMPiE is one of them.

**[0:01:39] PM:** I've been in variable data print for over 30 years. When XMPiE came on the scene, I fell in love. Designers love it. The people who have to manage the output love it, because it produces things they can print, and that isn't always true. It's a tool that just keeps – it's a set of tools that just keep growing. Wow, guys, kudos. You would think that after all these years, maybe you'd slow down a little bit and maybe stop innovating, does not seem to be the case.

**[0:02:12] DC:** So, Pat, we are here with Phil Gaskin from XMPiE in the UK, and we're here with Enda Kavanagh from XMPiE in Australia. Phil, I've seen you in the booth because we're sharing a whole seven together a lot of activity. Tell everybody about what's been going on there, what you've been doing at drupa, and most importantly, the conversations you're having with people coming to the booth.

**[0:02:35] PG:** Yes. Deborah, as you've seen, I mean, it's been so amazing, the amount of people that have visited XMPiE here, in hall seven, the DNA. But we've actually got more than that going on here at drupa. We're showcasing lots of different applications that we've got with some of our printing partners that are here. We've got samples from Landa, from Zicon. We've got finishing samples, some amazing finishing samples from Scodix. But we've also got people on the Fujifilm stand, and in HP as well. That's because we're showing the diversity of what we can do across the whole portfolio of our software. Whether that be e-commerce, or personalized print as you've talked about. All that completely integrated omni channel experience and experiences that were actually showcasing.

A really good example of that is what we have been doing at Fujifilm, we tend to refer to it as programmatic print, because it is variable data printing. But it's a great way of being able to integrate with lots of other technology to demonstrate, it's not just about data that you've got, an imagery and assets that you've got. Nowadays, you can go and get literally anything you want, and integrate into any system to generate personalized, relevant content in different channels.

**[0:03:47] PM:** Across every channel. It's one of the things I've always loved about the XMPiE approach is that, I can create a design theme, and then, I can make sure that I'm true to that theme regardless of my output channel, and the tools are going to help me get there. Especially for designers who've been challenged by dealing with channels they've never worked in before. It makes it so much easier because you kind of guide them through the process, which is just absolutely brilliant. So, I'm a huge fan. But tell me a little bit so you're doing programmatic, printed, Fujifilm. What are you doing over in hall 17 with the HP team. It is Enda who's going to help us with it.

**[0:04:27] EK:** Thanks for the opportunity. It's great to see you guys after so many years. So, over at HP, what we're doing is we're doing in the pouch section. So, we've got some versions through our e-commerce system. The idea, and especially since COVID is to turn the pouch, the package into a conversation, and find out more about the person who's actually buying this. With the example we have, we've got a pouch from pineapples and some avocados, it was very rich and creative. Then, on the back, it's got some information about the individual grower.

**[0:04:58] PM:** Oh, wow.

**[0:04:58] EK:** Of course, like everything in XMPiE world, if you can't measure it, don't do it, so we have a QR code. It then goes to a landing page about the particular grower and find out what their business model is and their ecosystem. But then, it says, "Hey, thank you, Mr. Customer, Ms. Consumer for buying the product. Give me some more information." Then, you can get into a database, and then I can target you more and every quarter about the growing season of the crops. Maybe they've had a bad summer, et cetera, et cetera. It turns this package into a conversation. We saw that especially since COVID, with panic buying.

**[0:05:33] DC:** I couldn't agree with you more. I'd like to kind of – I just want to preempt the, this has nothing to do with me, for anyone who thinks that on the other end of this listening situation. It does have something to do with you. More importantly, it will have something to do with you, because the Gen Zers, they care about all of this stuff. They want to know where their tomatoes come from, they want to make sure that they're buying authentic brands that they're supporting, especially if they're supporting them for causes. They want to understand that if there's

sustainability information on there, it's trackable, it's provable. They want a safe and secure bridge from print to digital.

You might not have customers in your pipeline at the moment, or on your roster at the moment. But as you move forward, if you cannot have these conversations to the point of, Eyelet presented this morning, you won't be able to say yes to more jobs, and you won't be able to offer more opportunities for your customers. I know it sounds complicated, but I just really, I like to always just start on, tell the printers out there it's not complicated. When Pat was mentioning before about designers using the tool, how does that manifest? Phil, you want to take that?

**[0:06:54] PG:** Yes, sure. Thanks, Deborah. Yes. Well, in terms of designers, it's a perfect natural extension into what they're doing already. They're working with usually Adobe creative tools. We of course are Adobe native, so they can continue to work in that, and we can enable the personalized, relevant content. It doesn't have to be really complicated databases or anything like that. Most of our customers use Microsoft Excel or just simple –

**[0:07:20] PM:** Google Sheets is the other one people are using now, yes.

**[0:07:23] PG:** Absolutely, just simple data files. Obviously, some of our more sophisticated customers that are doing high-volume, they work with more complex data, but you don't need to start there. We also have a range of – the portfolio itself is quite vast, but we cater for everybody. So, we've got desktop software, which is a great way of getting in without a huge cost. But we also have a subscription model as well.

Back to the point earlier, we've got many customers, printers, print service providers that actually are worried because they are being asked to do some digital services, not necessarily the full omni channel stuff, the XMPiE offers. But they're being asked to do emails as well as print. Of course, the first thing they might do is say, "But we don't do that, we'll just do your print." That then gives them the opportunity to go to another service provider, where they'll do the email, but maybe over time, they'll also take the print. So, our customer could end up losing out. We've seen a growing increase in customers taking our subscriptions and our entry-level products as a way of protecting their print volumes and starting to dip their toe and offer digital services.

**[0:08:30] PM:** When you look at that conversation that a printer might come to you and say, "Well, I've been given these opportunities, and I'm not really sure if I should say yes, or I should run the other way." Because if it's a new channel, it may seem a little scary. How does your team help them get to that comfort level where they can confidently say to their customer, "I got you. I can do it."?

**[0:08:51] PG:** I think one of the things to consider is that in the creative space, we integrate with Adobe, we've already talked about that. But all of our software is about open standards. So, we base it on technology that's already out there. So, if a business hasn't got those skills in-house, then it's very easy to go and get those skills. It's not proprietary to us, it's just industry-standard stuff. We also offer training, whether it be onsite training, we can do remote training. All of our customers that have a software support plan can access our campus platform, which is a video tutorial portal. Very popular, and a way of searching for a way of doing something, and finding a short three or four-minute video that actually takes them through it.

But on top of that, we also offer application services and professional services. We've got a whole raft of support behind the scenes to help people get started.

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**[0:10:36] DC:** I just want to touch upon the programmatic print again, because I think it's really important and it's not as complicated or scary as it is. With digital printing, digital printers can act like digital marketers and be with the right message at the right time. Just to use an example, Patricia has two lovely baby grandchildren, twins, right?

**[0:11:01] PM:** I do.

**[0:11:02] DC:** If she shops in a certain store, and she's buying a certain size of clothes for the kids, there is a pretty accurate assumption that she's going to need the next size –

**[0:11:15] PM:** Bigger clothes –

**[0:11:16] DC:** – within the next three months. So, within the next six months or whatever –

**[0:11:20] PM:** I could tell you. It's three weeks.

**[0:11:21] DC:** Okay. But whatever it might be, that gives that clothing store or that chain of clothing stores the ability to say, "Okay. What is the next purchase?" Or, maybe even skip one ahead because it happened so fast. Like, prepare for the winter, but you're showing them the clothes that would be appropriate at that time for the age of the kid, which is an easy thing to know. You know what they bought right without it being creepy.

**[0:11:51] PM:** It's not just clothes. You know where else it is? Food. This was the thing I don't even think about.

**[0:11:56] DC:** Home building. There's a million verticals.

**[0:11:58] PM:** But things about babies, you start with the formula, but then you need the pureed food stuff, and then you need the slightly heavier stuff. You need the chewy things for the teeth. You know, I had no idea. The grocery bills gone crazy since the twins were born. But the people who get me are the people sending me coupons –

**[0:12:21] DC:** Exactly.

**[0:12:21] PM:** – and there are some of them out there already sending them and saying, "Well, we know you might be ready for the next thing." God bless them, I'm using those coupons.

**[0:12:28] DC:** Or messaging, or look out for our email coming with offers for the winter. We know, I mean, in size, one year, whatever it might be. Whether you're a local business, or a regional chain, or a national chain, or global chain, this is an opportunity for you really to be speaking to people with the right message literally at the right time.

**[0:12:55] PM:** Enda, can you kind of expand on that, but come back to that measurement thing too for me. Because that is such a critical piece of marketing. If you don't know if it's working, it's hard to get the next budget.

**[0:13:08] EK:** Look, absolutely. I think one of the strengths of what XMPiE can do with a tool called Circle, et cetera, we can do late binding and a campaign. So, if we're doing a multi-channel campaign, and it's got email, print, text, message, social, et cetera, we can measure instantly. I always say to our customers, self-promotion is the key to success because it proves two things. It proves to your sales team you're capable of executing it, and it proves then to your customers that you can execute it for them on their behalf.

If you're standing up in front of your board of directors, and you're going in and seeing a campaign life, and there may be a certain demographic or a certain scope in the database that's not quite working, you can change it instantly, and then go off, and say, "Hey, the under 30s are not replying to this campaign, I wonder why. Maybe they prefer email, maybe they prefer prints."

**[0:13:08] PM:** Maybe they prefer a different image on the front of it.

**[0:14:01] EK:** Absolutely. Absolutely right.

**[0:14:03] DC:** Good point.

**[0:14:04] EK:** If I look at the theme of what we're doing here at drupa, the future of personalization. Now, we've been doing this since 2000. Last year, we were able to measure over seven billion pass, images on our XMPiE servers. That's only with servers that we are

allowed. There's also a heap of servers and secure areas that we don't know. It's seven billion plus. So, we know. So, what's the future? Well, now AI is here, so we have to accept this.

The future of personalization, you can go to the stand, you can fill in some information. It then goes off into Zapier. and then it goes into ChatGPT, and then it goes into Amazon Polly, and then it goes into the XMPiE server, and then you can measure us, and then you could refer friends. So then, all of a sudden, you're an advocate of the brand, and you're doing the push marketing on behalf of the brand.

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**[0:14:58] PM:** Everyone needs a keen understanding of the technologies and workflows across their business ecosystem. McGrewGroup helps you understand your current state, and define a path to the future with confidence. From where you are today to where you want to go in the future, McGrewGroup is ready to help you grow, expand, optimize, and thrive. Drop us a note on LinkedIn, or at our website, [mcgrewgroup.com](http://mcgrewgroup.com).

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**[0:15:25] PM:** Isn't that what we all want? We want our advocate.

**[0:15:27] EK:** Make life easy.

**[0:15:29] DC:** Phil, you actually did a presentation at drupa DNA stage about AI and personalization. It was impromptu, but we had an open spot. I'm like, "Call on XMPiE."

**[0:15:37] PM:** Yes, there you go.

**[0:15:38] DC:** You showed really amazing examples. But, it's still scary to people. You say, use artificial intelligence. Again, it's like workflow optimization, it could mean so many things. Can you drill it down to in its simplest terms about how you're utilizing AI in your technology?



**[0:15:56] PG:** Yes. I think it's important to sort of make the distinction here that we're using it as a way of enhancing what people already have. So, we're not looking at replacing what people do. We're actually talking about deployment times. For example, the comic that we put together, as an example for Fujifilm, it's a great example, not just of AI, but of integration. You scan a QR code, obviously, start with print. You scan a QR code. You then take a picture with your phone of yourself or somebody, and it creates an avatar that looks just like you, and you can change the clothes, and other features. But the important thing here is that, that's an integration. Not with a printing technology, but with a gaming technology called Ready Player Now. So, why reinvent the wheel?

We've used their technology that gamers use when they're gaming with their friends that's an avatar of them. We've integrated it into print. We then ask people a question, could be any question. We demonstrated that we can go out there, and we can go to Open AI, ChatGPT. We can get some response. Now, that response could be text, it could be enhancing a brochure to be specific and relevant to somebody. Not to do the whole brochure necessarily, just to add extra relevancy.

But, as Enda touched on earlier, that's great in print. But in the omni-channel space, text is a little bit dull, potentially. So, why wouldn't we then convert it into audio, or even better, take that audio, and deliver it in a personalized video. So, your name is in the video, but it's spoken along with whatever content you've asked for, and delivered immediately in a video. For me, the future of personalization, and the use of AI is about shaping. Hence, the shaping the future of personalization. Shaping what you do, augmenting it, but not necessarily just replacing it.

**[0:17:49] PM:** How do you navigate the generations that are coming up behind us that are a little bit concerned about personalization? They like customization, they like targeting, they don't always want us to use their name. So, is there a style that you can adopt that will allow them to feel spoken to without feeling invaded?

**[0:18:11] PG:** Yes. Enda touched on the point earlier about how we've got a platform that supports many different channels. Many businesses out there that maybe start doing emails, or they start doing other content, as well as print. I've got a range of different software vendors solutions. So, there's no way of joining it all up with XMPiE because it's a platform. It doesn't

matter whether you're about to send an email or generate a bit of print. If somebody changes a preference, or changes the way that they interact with you, then we affect that across every single channel from that moment on. You're calling off of that when you've got to synchronize into other environments.

**[0:18:49] EK:** I think, my observation too is, if I look at my own children, they don't have a letterbox experience.

**[0:18:54] PM:** No.

**[0:18:55] EK:** It's in the inbox, or it's true social. So, we've got some good demos where social starts the conversation. Then, you can use some of the things that Phil was talking about to drive a whole personalized experience. It may not start with prints, but it's going to end with prints, or print will be in the journey somewhere.

**[0:19:13] PM:** And you know, depending on the age of your kids too, the experiences seem to be kind of wiggling back and forth from generation to generation. Because we keep meeting young folks who love their mailbox, because to them, it's a novel experience. Because the generation before them, maybe their older brothers and sisters were straight to digital. But now, all of a sudden, they're getting pieces of mail in the mailbox.

**[0:19:37] DC:** Right. But the exception to that is junk mail, which I just call, mail without a purpose. It's spray and pray, it's not the right message at the right time to the right person. When it is that, they love it because it has meaning in their life. It might have meaning to their next purchase, or their next semester in school, or something from the puppy shelter, something that they care about when it's just buy more stuff from me, or here's a catalog that you didn't ask for. They actually get upset about that because they feel there's wasted resources in their mailbox. Phil?

**[0:20:19] PG:** Yes. My own personal preference is, receive direct mail. You can tell instantly which ones just to throw into the recycling.

**[0:20:26] DC:** Yes, I have a throwaway pile.

**[0:20:28] PG:** But it's the ones that are creative, that are not necessarily personalized, but relevant to me. And maybe embellished, or more tactile. They're the ones that I'm going to actually interact with on the way to the recycling. They're the ones that grabbed my attention. Of course, our software enables that creativity.

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**[0:21:22] DC:** All right. The last question I have is about the people that are coming to see you in the booth here. Are they asking forward questions? Are they asking catching-up questions? Are they finally realizing this is something they should investigate and they're investigating with you? Are they looking to add on because they're not utilizing all the services of XMPiE, which is something we spoke about in our last podcast? You have tools in there that are so underutilized. I compare it to my phone. I do about four things with my phone, although I can probably run half of the America from my Samsung 24 Plus.

**[0:22:04] PG:** Yeah. I think it's a mix of all those things. But certainly, at this drupa compared with other drupas, there's more of an acceptance of software, and that needs to play a part to help service providers to compete. I've seen myself people come up and say, "I'm a printer, this is what I do. I want something to differentiate what I do from my competitors." They're the sort of conversations that we're seeing. Of course, we've got the perfect answer and solution for those people as well.

**[0:22:33] EK:** I think also, it's the insurance of the volume. I have my press, and I want to make sure that I can get more from the same. Our customers, our good, mature customers will tell us

that XMPie can be the equivalent of two full-time salespeople. With ecommerce, you're creating sticky relationships. So, if you own the assets of your customer, they're not going to go anywhere else. So, it's a whole strategy.

**[0:22:58] DC:** I couldn't agree more, especially creating sticky customers. I did about another podcast with Matthew Parker called UKvUSA. We were both print customers when we're talking about what's the difference between a loyal and a sticky customer. We concluded that you're loyal to the person, but you're sticky to the process. If that process makes my life easier, if I know that everything I need is in one place, I'm really sorry if my loyalty to – if my person leaves, I'm not moving my things. I might try to give that person work from another at their new business to print, but I'm not moving my portal over anytime soon. I think it's super important to recognize things like that.

It has been an absolute pleasure spending drupa with you here in drupa DNA in hall seven. Patricia, any final words about XMPie?

**[0:23:53] PM:** First, I think we should explain DNA, it's drupa next age, and that's where XMPie really fits in. Because, well, you've been around for 24 years, it's always new. Every time I talk to you, I learn something new. You have some great partners that help you do some great plugins as well. I'm not even going to mention any of them. I want people to come to you to find out how you can help them with your core solution set, and the partners that you work with both in plugins and also your press output partners. Because I'd never be able to do it justice, and you guys have such a fabulous story. So, I want to thank you so much for the time.

**[0:24:38] EK:** Absolute pleasure.

**[0:24:40] PG:** It's been great to be able to be a part of drupa DNA as well. So, thank you both.

**[0:24:44] DC:** Thanks, everybody. Until next time, XMPie long and prosper.

[END OF EPISODE]

**[0:24:51] DC:** Thanks for listening to Podcasts From the Printerverse. Please subscribe, click some stars, and leave us a review. Connect with us through [printmediacentr.com](http://printmediacentr.com). We'd love to hear your feedback on our shows and topics that are of interest for future broadcasts. Until next time, thanks for joining us. Print long and prosper.

[END]

### **Mentioned in This Episode:**

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)

The Future of Personalisation: <https://demo.xmpie.com/FutureOfPersonalisation/>

XMPIE: <https://www.xmpie.com/>

XMPIE Resource Page: <https://www.xmpie.com/resource-library/>

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