

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:00.0] DC: Today on The Print Report, catching up with Landa after drupa.

[0:00:04.1] PM: Let's discover how Landa is unlocking new opportunities.

[0:00:05.0] DC: Welcome to The Print Report with Deborah Corn and Pat McGrew, all the print that's fit for news.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:19.7] DC: Hey everybody, welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse, more specifically, The Print Report with Deborah Corn and Pat McGrew. I'm Deborah Corn, which means.

[0:00:27.8] PM: I'm Pat McGrew.

[0:00:29.1] DC: Hello, Pat McGrew, how are you today?

[0:00:32.2] PM: Doing great, how are you, Deborah Corn?

[0:00:34.6] DC: I am excellent, you know I'm always excited when there's a Landa around. I love my Landas, and today, we are going to be catching up with team Landa since drupa. A lot of stuff has been going on over there, exciting things that I believe are of interest to people, which is why we are doing this podcast, and to help us understand all of that, we're welcoming Nir Zarmi. He is the senior vice president of growth and strategy at Landa Digital Printing. Welcome to the podcast, Nir.

[0:01:07.2] NZ: Hi, Deborah. Welcome, thank you.

[0:01:09.4] DC: Nir, can you tell everybody a little bit more about the work that you do at Landa?

[0:01:14.0] NZ: Yeah, sure. So, my name is Nir Zarmi, I'm SVP of Growth and Strategy for Landa. I am under my capacity is the product line that are still in development, like the W11, the strategy part of the business, workflow, and other topics.

[0:01:32.1] PM: Which makes it great for me because, of course, workflow is one of my favorite topics. So, Nir, one of the things that I saw at drupa that really caught my attention was that you were telling more of a workflow story there because you know, I went through all the big show and listened to all the really cool things that were going on, looked at all the print samples because I love print samples, so the label samples, and just all the different things that Landa is working on these days, the packaging samples.

But workflow caught my attention because these presses, they need to be fed fast, efficient files. So, as you were at drupa, how much of your conversation with your existing and potential customers was about workflow?

[0:02:20.2] NZ: With existing customers, it wasn't about workflow because they know the workflow, they know the product, they know how to work with the product but with potential customers, it was very much around workflow and then we had a very interesting conversation with customers about workflow. One of the essential things when you buy a Landa, when you buy such a digital press with such a capacity is to make sure that you can easily integrate it into your production environment.

And, of course, workflow is an essential part of it. We have to make sure that you can integrate your current workflow into the Landa to merge them together to do it easily. We have all the tools and where to explain, and we did explain to potential customers in drupa that it's really easy and how to do it.

[0:03:09.4] PM: And Deborah, it sounded like from, I know, you have a long conversation with Benny Landa at drupa and had a chance to get his sense of how things were going on. It sounded like you folks were signing deals and really having that full drupa experience during the show.

[0:03:28.2] NZ: Yes, so we put ourselves, quite a challenging goal from a sales perspective, and actually, we over-achieved the goals, so it was a very successful drupa from sales prospecting from sales perspective for Landa. Not only from sales perspective, from other perspectives as well but yes, absolutely.

[0:03:47.3] PM: The people that you are speaking with at drupa, were they only focused on workflow or were they also focused on the agility and productivity of the presses? Does that count as workflow too?

[0:04:01.3] NZ: Workflow is always an additional topic. It's never the main topic that potential customers talk about it, but when they become serious when they want to really look into the integration, they go into the workflow, the workflow path but the main interest of the customer, when they come to see us, when they come to visit us, is to understand how the technology, how the presses can contribute to their business.

It's all about the print quality, the format, the substrate range, and the printing speed, and then when they are convinced about all these, they look into the workflow and just want to make sure that will go smoothly as well.

[0:04:39.3] PM: So, Nir, how much of a sustainability strategy did you have to prepare as you were coming into drupa? So, I know, we heard from a lot of brand owners who were walking through all the halls and we were talking to a lot of printers about how their customers were asking them about sustainability. Was that a part of your preparation?

[0:05:01.2] NZ: That was a real part of the preparation, and the focus area for us, we have several pillars in our booth in drupa, and sustainability was one of them. You may remember the centerpiece that we had in drupa where we showed the differences in waste when you print a thousand jobs in offset, versus the same thousand jobs with Landa, and I think it was mind-blowing to see, you know when to visualize the difference.

Yeah, so, sustainability was a very important part for us. Not only for drupa. Since we started Landa, sustainability was a major point in our development. We focused on water-based ink, we focused on not using any harmful solvent as part of our technology, and it was right from the

beginning. As we developed and as the product evolved, we also realized the huge impact of waste reduction that you have when you print with Landa when you print with such a productive press and at the end of the day, translate it into reducing the carbon footprint that customer can – or that printer generates when you use the Landa, relative to offset by – it can reach even 50%.

[0:06:16.0] PM: So, we know that in Europe, that is such a huge talk track right now because the governments are going to start really monitoring a lot of the waste. Do you find that that's also a talk track? I know you sold a Grand Print and S11P. I know that you know, Advantage has bought them, Quantum is buying additional machines, the folks at Hudson. Do they come to you asking about sustainability stories as well?

[0:06:43.1] NZ: Oh yeah, absolutely yes. It's not only a European thing, also in the US, we have a lot of inquiries about sustainability. I think that Hudson published that they are the first commercial printer in the US that went into zero carbon footprint. Of course, in China, it's a major topic, sustainability, the government in China really tried to minimize the impact on the environment. So yes, absolutely.

[0:07:09.0] DC: Were the people who came to the booth, were they pre-educated on your presses or were you having to talk them through all the functionality and features that they were asking about, you know what I mean? Were they pre-prepared? Had they done their research and what was some of the questions that you were getting that maybe were surprising to you?

[0:07:31.3] NZ: So, some of the visitors did pre-educate themselves about the product and did their homework in recent but many of them, it was first or let's say, early discovery of the product, and especially the new product because in drupa, we launched the new product, DS11, and DS11P with the higher productivity, with the higher print speed, with the AI functionality. So, of course, people didn't know a lot about these functions.

For some of the visitors, it was more into going to see the demo, more in-depth questions about the capabilities like we said in the beginning, workflow, sustainability, and economics of printing with Landa versus alternatives, and for some of them, it was really the early engagement with – and the earlier discovery of the product.

[0:08:22.3] PM: So, you used two letters, AI in the explanation. In all of the work that I've been doing this year, those two letters come up a lot because everybody thinks they understand what artificial intelligence in the context of a press really is, could you explain how Landa is leveraging artificial intelligence to create a better product?

[0:08:48.9] NZ: Yes. We use AI, artificial intelligence, as part of inspecting every print that we print. We use AI in order to analyze the printout and find some artifacts or faults in the print, and then analyze what is the correct way of correcting those faults. For example, if we like to see misregister, we use AI in order to identify the misregistration in the print and to see what is the best way to fix this misregistration, you know, the two online fix and improve our distraction and keep it within a very tight ones.

[0:09:27.2] PM: I would imagine this is really fast because I know and if you were doing this on an analog press trying to correct a misregistration can take some time. Whereas, you're moving at the speed of light. So, leveraging AI, I would imagine, gives you some advantages in terms of eliminating a lot of the potential waste of misregistered papers.

[0:09:52.1] NZ: Yes, and we have to do it, like you said, very, very fast. We have to do it every print. So, we print 11,200 sheets an hour. So, every fraction of a second, we have to analyze, correct, and and keep it within the tolerance, and that's really fast. It requires computer power, it requires very sophisticated algorithms but we have developed all these, and integrated it and it worked very nicely.

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[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:11:24.8] DC: Patricia, I need a clarification on that, please. So, when yours says adjust and, Nir, you could chime in too, is that a human? Does light flash and says, "Okay human, go in there and do something." Or the press is actually self-realizing and making corrections itself, like the Terminator?

[0:11:45.1] PM: I think, Nir, you need to answer that one for –

[0:11:47.4] DC: I mean, is it going to start like ordering coffee for me? What's it going to – it sounds a little scary.

[0:11:52.2] NZ: So, that's exactly why we use artificial intelligence, okay? To really avoid human interaction. There is no red light, there is no yellow light, there is no, "Oh, you have to do that or you have to do other thing." The system does it by itself and maintains the registration within the specification, in this case, a registration or other parameter within the specification, absolutely autonomously, and automatically.

[0:12:19.6] DC: And then, if you start to notice a pattern, then you go back to research and development and before the next press comes out, you maybe make some adjustment to make sure that nothing shifts in the – I'm assuming that's what's happening, there's a shift because it's going so fast, that's why it becomes off register, right?

[0:12:35.1] NZ: So, I think about registration there are a lot of shifts and we keep, you know, the print using specification, yes, but we collect a lot of data from the press. All our presses are connected to the cloud and we collect and there are tens or hundreds of sensors within the press. We collect all the information from these sensors, we analyze this information from the sensors and that's part of the input to our R&D team, how to improve the press for the next version, for the next software versions, or for modification in hardware refute.

[0:13:10.5] PM: So, I'm going to get a little technical for one second, right?

[0:13:13.5] DC: Go for it.

[0:13:13.7] PM: So, Landa is a master at a lot of things but to that always makes me giggle because I'm a technology nerd. Are the blanket transfer technology in combination with the inkjet technology? Because, Benny was the master of blanket transfer, right? In these first forays. I think people laughed in the beginning, they weren't sure that it was really possible to do what he does.

As Landa started to evolve and the combination of the inkjet and the blanket transfer, really demonstrated what you could produce in terms of quality, I think people kind of got on board. At Hudson, I was watching them print copies of images off of the James Webb Telescope that were just absolutely incredible.

So, as you start to look at your forays into packaging, which has got to be a huge opportunity for you guys, do you start to see that brand owners will start to leverage the power that you can bring to them in the quality that you can bring to them for packaging differently than what they do when they're just printing on a brown craft piece of paper?

[0:14:28.0] NZ: Absolutely yes, and that's practically something that we experience during the, I would say, as we speak. Brand owners realize the power of chromography in respect to color gamut and appearance of color saturation and color stability because when you print at a Landa if you print on a Landa in Europe or in the US if you print in your Landa in the West Coast or the East Coast, you'll get the same color, very rich color gamut, and the same color.

And brand owners utilize it in order to get to more marketing power from their packages or marketing power from their posters and we have discussions with brand owners and our customers, our – the printshop that use the Landa have discussions with the brand owners, and that's absolutely something that is part of the developing of market awareness for the technology.

[0:15:25.2] PM: Was there anything anyone asked you for during drupa that hadn't occurred to you? Some feature, some functions, some thing that they wanted? I mean, I'm running out of ideas of new things we can do with these presses but did anyone come to you with something unique?

[0:15:42.3] NZ: Well, that's an interesting question. If someone come with a requirement that was really unique and we didn't think about it, I can't think about something out of my mind right now. I'm sure that people have asked some questions and some of them we could provide or request or a functionality that we can provide with the presses and some of them not but I'm not recalling any requirement that was right out of the blue –

[0:16:09.2] PM: Because at the end of the day, you're almost doing it all, right? Because you can solve the packaging problem, you can solve the label and pouch problem, you can solve the commercial printing problem, and the book printing problem.

[0:16:21.3] DC: I mean, no questions about substrate? I would think that that would be very topical, like what can go in the press, no?

[0:16:28.1] NZ: There were many questions about substrate but there wasn't any substrate that we were asked about that you say, "Wow, we didn't know that there was such a substrate" or that was new. So, there were questions about substrate, there were questions about color gamma, there were questions about application, there were questions about you know, VDP and unique applications in this rate, in this productivity rate, which is not a trivial thing.

So, there were a lot of questions, I don't recall any questions that really blew our minds and were something out of any scope.

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[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:17:39.4] DC: Pat, one thing I never hear around Landa is finishing. Is that something that should be a question asked by a printer walking up to see a demo?

[0:17:49.1] PM: I think you always ask the question about finishing but what we know about Landa is that because of the nature of the press and the nature of the places they're really designed to fit into, very often the finishing is already there, and they're sliding in and tell me if I'm misunderstanding this but often you're going into either a startup that has already figured out what they want to be finishing because they know the product they want to sell or you're sliding into an existing commercial operation where they've got an investment in finishing and you're going to dovetail to it.

[0:18:27.3] NZ: Yes, so most of our installations are at existing production how our press is run next to the offset press in the – where there is offset and 90 plus percent of our customer have offset in their production. The product runs next to the offset, the printouts go to the same finishing lines like the offset if it is a commercial printer or if it's a converter, folding carton converter, so there is no unique requirement for any special finishing use when you print with the Landa.

It just integrates into your existing production line and the fact that we have inline coating in the press and you can do a UV coating or water-based coating and use just the same coatings that you used today for your offset production, that's a big plus for printers because it means and especially folding carton converters because it means that the product at the end of the day has the same properties at the filler line later on.

So, there are no unique limitations or any restrictions in respect to finishing when you print your jobs on the Landa.

[0:19:41.5] PM: So Nir, do you feel like you're going to be expanding? I know you put the new ink plant into New York at the beginning of the year. Landa are starting to do – expand their footprint worldwide. What are the challenges for Landa in terms of making sure that you can get nanographic ink everywhere and then that you can also get the service and support that you need everywhere you'd like to sell Landa into?

[0:20:04.1] NZ: Yes. So, as part of our – we are very focused about our expansion. So, we are not selling worldwide, we are selling in North America, we are selling in Europe, and in China, and we are quite focused in our target countries for the presses further wide. In order to support this expansion and to fulfill the demand, we recently opened the ink plant in the US. We have an ink plant in the Netherlands and we have an ink plant here in Israel, and we manufacture the ink on a global base.

It has a lot of advantages not only from a supply perspective, from an assurance of supplies perspective but also from a sustainability perspective. You don't have to ship water all around the world, you don't have to ship raw materials from one place to another place, you produce locally and that's an advantage for Landa and for our customers.

[0:21:00.5] DC: Nir, I love that you're expanding your ink capabilities, especially that you're having some in a plant in the United States. We certainly learned during the pandemic, it's good to have things in this country that have, you know, not necessarily always remained here but my question is this, you sold a ton of presses at drupa, you've sold a ton of presses since drupa including repeat customers.

And I have to assume that there is a finite amount of presses that you could actually build each year and I'm wondering how you are putting people on the waitlist and qualifying them and are you giving repeat customers the first shot at another press?

[0:21:41.9] NZ: So, repeat customers of course have a priority but we are not that limited with the production capacity at this stage and we have built the production capacity to max the demand. So, our production capacity right now is not a limiting factor for us. What we do is responsibly grow the installers around the ability to support those customers responsibly to

make sure that they get all they need in the ecosystem around them, and that's basically what drives our growth pace.

[0:22:15.2] DC: You also announced a partnership with Gelato at drupa that is really springing into action now that the show is over. Can you discuss that and from your perspective of growth and strategy how this is helpful to your customers?

[0:22:32.8] NZ: Yes. So, our partnership with Gelato is all based on common values. Landa and Gelato shared a lot of the basic values. Gelato promoted this to the manufacturing, they promote sustainability, and produce locally instead of shipping worldwide, and that's also something that Landa very much believes in. So, it's all about the same values. It's about the ability to print everywhere and get the same result and similar results.

And since Landa and Gelato share the same customers, not only that it drives more print to our customers, our customers benefit from it, Gelato benefit from it, and Landa will benefit from it.

[0:23:19.4] DC: Patricia, what is your perspective on the GelatoConnect aspect of all of this?

[0:23:24.4] PM: So, we think of GelatoConnect as part of the third generation of web-to-print and print network types of providers. They're more of a partner than they are a simple print network provider because with GelatoConnect. You're getting a lot of additional advantage use, you're getting your buying power in terms of buying substrate for your print jobs, you're getting a lot of analytics that are available to help you grow your business.

You're getting a true partnership, so a Landa partnership makes a lot of sense because if you think about the Gelato constituency, a lot of the big brands use Gelato and are part of that network and they have high-quality demands, high turnaround demands. They are the kind of printer where Landa as the print technology makes a lot of sense and for that reason, I would expect that this is going to be a growing adventure. GelatoConnect and Landa are really made for each other.

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[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:25:08.1] DC: Let me ask you this, I want to turn focus back to drupa for one second. I mean, up until the last day, your booth was absolutely packed. Mr. Landa was still doing three shows or more a day in the theater. Can you talk about the impact of that and what went into producing that show? Also, was it recorded at all? Is there a way for people to see a replay of that?

[0:25:33.7] NZ: Yeah, like you said, our booth was packed until the last day, and we ran the show until the last day and that was heartwarming to see how interested the printers are in listening and learning new things. For those that missed the opportunity to see the show or want to listen again, the show is available on our YouTube channel. So, you can just look into it there and see it.

It was very informal, like you saw, right? It was a very informative show, we present the technology, Benny presented the technology, and users of that technology really shared their experience with the technology. So, yes, also, the press demos, they were packed. Every time that we did a demo, there were tens and tens of people around the press just listening, looking, trying to touch with their hands, the printout, investigated the printout.

We distributed hundreds of thousands of printouts and print samples there for visitors who collected those print samples. I'm sure that many of them are now hanged in offices.

[0:26:49.4] DC: Hundred percent. It was like an art gallery in there and I have to also say that I really appreciated that you had tubes for people to put the posters in. So, they weren't – I mean, they weren't like carrying them around in a little canvas bag. I was like, "Thank you for making

this easy for people.” And then they could just carry it away and the posters wouldn’t get ruined, you can roll them up. I mean, it was like an art gallery in there. It was really fantastic.

Okay, last question because you are the SVP of growth and strategy and I also found out, you were the first Landa employee ever but we’ll get to that in another time, I just think that that was cool to mention. Here’s your moment to really share, why is investing in a Landa Digital Press, how is that part of a printshop’s growth and strategy plan for the next three to five years?

[0:27:45.2] NZ: Yeah. So, investing in Landa really bump your productivity and your efficiency as a printshop. Landa is a new category, it’s not the traditional digital printing, it’s not an offset. It’s really addressed these big productivity gap and profitability gap that you have for the medium runs and short runs. When you install a Landa, you immediately realize that your productivity on the digital side growing dramatically.

But also your efficiency on the analog side growing dramatically because you take all those jobs that kill the productivity of your offset production floor, move them into the Landa, and here, it’s a win-win. So, you have a very productive digital printing equipment and you get an offset floor where you can utilize your offset presses to write at their sweet spot, and that’s not to mention, the added value work that you can now offer to your customers.

You can now offer your customers VDP applications, rent protections, and other unique digital applications, and hope that address your question, Deborah.

[0:29:01.7] DC: It really has and one day, I hope we don’t have to have the offset, versus digital conversation anymore. I would hope that the printers understand, you know, why you would want to use a digital press and you know, now that the colors are as compatible or comparable as they can be from analog to digital, there’s, you know, it’s all about customer convenience and the user experience.

Do I want something that is going to all of my neighbors or do I want something that is specifically for me? And that is the advantage of digital printing and certainly where Landa comes in is you want it to look fabulous, then this is where you go. So, thank you so much for

your time, I really appreciate it. Thanks to Pat McGrew, as always, for her thought leadership and expertise. Until next time everybody, Landa long and prosper.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:29:55.9] 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, 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]

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