

NEW

**Direct mail and door
drop category for
2026**



The **digital**printer awards **2026**

ENTRY FORM

EXTENDED DEADLINE: 3 September 2026

“

We're a small company so to win against such strong competition and big names in the industry gives us a real boost and reassures our customer base that the work we produce is among the best in the UK.

”

George Penny, production director, Ripe Digital

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12 November 2026 • InterContinental London Park Lane

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Established more than 19 years ago, the Digital Printer Awards are the industry's premier accolade and the most revered showcase for digital print, finishing, and related technologies in commercial applications.

Categories cover everything from direct mail and door drops, to books, embellishment, and even business initiatives and industry achievements.

And if being nominated for or winning a Digital Printer award wasn't prestigious enough, the gala lunch event in central London is an excellent opportunity to mingle with your peers, network, and make new connections.

There are 15 categories to enter, as well as a Supreme award.

WHY ENTER?

Awards are one of the most powerful and cost-effective marketing tools and the Digital Printer Awards are **FREE** to enter. For any business, entering awards requires time and energy, but the investment can return dividends, both in terms of business opportunities and employee morale.

MARKETING AND PR OPPORTUNITIES

Finalists and winners benefit from:

- Coverage in *Digital Printer* magazine and associated media channels
 - Social media exposure
 - Award logos for use in marketing materials
- Content for case studies, sales presentations, and exhibitions

INDUSTRY RECOGNITION AND CREDIBILITY

The Digital Printer Awards are highly respected within the print and packaging sector. Being shortlisted – or winning – positions your company as a leader in innovation, quality, and technical excellence. This recognition strengthens your credibility with customers, suppliers, and partners.

NETWORKING AND INDUSTRY VISIBILITY

The awards ceremony attracts key players across the digital print supply chain – printers, brand owners, suppliers, and innovators – providing valuable networking opportunities.

COMPETITIVE DIFFERENTIATION

Being shortlisted or winning at the awards provides a powerful way to stand out in a crowded marketplace. Demonstrating award-winning print capability can help you win new business and justify premium pricing.

CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE

Being shortlisted or winning reassures existing and prospective customers that they are working with a high-performing, quality-focused supplier.

SHOWCASE INNOVATION

The Digital Printer Awards celebrates technical achievement, sustainability advancements, and creative problem-solving.

Entering allows you to highlight breakthroughs in:

- Print quality
- Sustainability initiatives
- Process improvements
- New technology adoption
- Complex technical challenges

TEAM RECOGNITION AND MOTIVATION

Submitting an entry acknowledges the hard work of your production, prepress, and technical teams. Recognition boosts morale, encourages innovation, and supports employee retention.

“Winning the wide and super-wide format award is a real endorsement of our people and process. The judges' recognition of scale, colour-matching, and the challenge of installing difficult materials underscores the investment we've made in equipment. We're proud and grateful for this honour.”

Michael Djanie, marketing executive, FaberExposize UK

How to enter

Please submit a separate entry form for each job, project, or campaign in each award category.

Photocopied entry forms are acceptable.

For the printed product categories, please provide at least one sample.

Up to three entries per category are FREE of charge and £50 per entry thereafter, contact chloe.w@whitmar.co.uk to arrange payment. Entries into multiple categories are also allowed, though **only one job/campaign can be entered into one category.**

Supporting statement (non-print categories)

Please include a typed statement of 500 words maximum (on a separate A4 sheet) explaining why your entry merits an award. This should outline the following:

- ▶ Background
- ▶ Objectives
- ▶ Strategy
- ▶ Implementation and creativity
- ▶ Results and evaluation

Tables and tickets are now available to book:

Send entries to:
Digital Printer Awards 2026
30 London Road
Southborough
Tunbridge Wells
Kent
TN4 0RE

**CLOSING
DATE**
3
September 2026



Returning entries

Whitmar Publications is unable to return entries except by prior arrangement. Any participants who wish to have their entry sample returned must arrange collection themselves within four weeks of the awards ceremony.

☐ **Please tick here** if you would like your entries returned.

A day to celebrate

Nominated finalists will be announced prior to the awards presentation in the October/November 2026 issue of *Digital Printer*. Nominated entries will be on show at the awards lunch where the winners will be presented with their award by the category sponsor.

The awards ceremony will be held on 12 November 2026 at the InterContinental London Park Lane, W1J 7QY. A limited number of tables are available, each for 10 guests, at £3000+VAT per table and individual places at £300+VAT. Tables and tickets are now available to book. Visit digitalprinterawards.co.uk

Rules

- ▶ Each project can only be entered into one category. Multiple submissions of the same job may result in disqualification.
- ▶ No previous winning job may be re-entered from the same or different company.
- ▶ Entries must have been produced by the printing company entering the awards using digital equipment.
- ▶ Any outwork should be acknowledged and credited. Print equipment manufacturers and suppliers are not eligible to enter.
- ▶ Entries are for commercial work undertaken by the printing company entering the awards, except marketing collateral.
- ▶ All entries must be produced between 1 September 2025 and 3 September 2026.
- ▶ Whitmar Publications reserves the right to use any entries received for marketing and promotional purposes in its magazines and on its websites.
- ▶ Entrants must have obtained the permission of their customers to enter their work into the awards.
- ▶ Whitmar Publications cannot accept responsibility for entries submitted.
- ▶ The decision of the judges is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- ▶ Entries received after the deadline will be subject to a £100 fee unless prior permission has been granted.
- ▶ Entries may be moved to a different category at the discretion of the judges.
- ▶ By entering you agree to all technical information being published on the website and in the magazine.
- ▶ The printing company's contact details should be submitted with the entry, if it is being entered on their behalf.
- ▶ Whitmar Publications reserves the right to withdraw a category at any time.
- ▶ All printing companies entered agree that, if nominated, they will be directly represented at the awards ceremony in London on 12 November 2026.

Any questions?

For further information and clarification on any issue regarding the Digital Printer Awards 2026, please contact **Chloe Ward** on **+44 (0)1892 779599** or email: chloe.w@whitmar.co.uk

SUPREME AWARD

One category winner will be crowned overall Supreme Winner. The very best of the best. The judges will choose the entry they believe exemplifies the pinnacle of digital print performance.

CATEGORIES

Adding value

Printed products that clearly show the benefit of digital print to enhance profitability and/or effectiveness. Please provide evidence of how digital production increased effectiveness, highlighting the benefits to your customer and their clients. These can include financial performance, raised awareness, better response, or other elements that clearly demonstrate added value.

B2 digital print

This category aims to demonstrate and recognise the growing adoption and value of the B2 format in digital print, across both toner (dry and Electrolnk) and inkjet printing technologies in any print applications. The judges will look for the benefits that accrue specifically to the format, in terms of application flexibility, overall productivity, reduced production cost, and/or job turnaround time, including finishing, embellishment, or any other post-press process.

Books

Any digitally printed book is eligible. Monochrome or colour, printed on-demand, of any run length, personalised or not. The judges will be looking at the production quality including repro print and binding. Additionally, they will be considering challenges and advantages for the producer or the customer by using digital print.

Creative use of substrates

Examples of jobs where the physical attributes of the material are fundamental to their appeal and success.

This includes printing onto challenging substrates and sympathetic design, print, and finishing to highlight the tangible and tactile qualities of the materials used.

Designed for digital print and finishing

This award will be given to the job that best exemplifies the capabilities and strengths of digital print and finishing.

This may include extended gamut printing, use of additional colours, fluorescent or clear inks or toners, personalisation/variable data capability (at least three samples will be required to confirm this), printing on unusual substrates, digital embellishment (each item potentially different), or other special effects techniques.

Digitally printed labels and packaging

Labels and packaging that use digital printing to deliver additional benefit to the customer. That may include making high-quality products available for micro and small businesses, in addition to providing agile supply chains and reduced inventory and waste.

NEW FOR 2026 Direct mail and door drops

This new category celebrates outstanding creativity, strategy, and execution in digitally printed mail campaigns that land directly in the hands of customers. This award recognises work that cuts through the noise – combining compelling design, intelligent data use, personalisation, and flawless print production to drive measurable engagement and results. Whether highly targeted direct mail or large-scale door drop campaigns, entries should demonstrate how digital print elevates impact, strengthens brand connection, and delivers real ROI.

Finishing and embellishment

The use of post-press processes to add durability, visual appeal/perceived value, and differentiation to finished products. Judges will be looking for evidence that the finishing processes provided clear benefits. These may be through the format, feel, and appearance of the job, or reduced time, cost, and material usage.

Future star

This award is for any employee under the age of 30, who is playing a key role in the future of the digital printing value chain; nominees are welcomed from all areas of the supply chain. Entries for this category must include a supporting statement outlining why this individual should be considered for the award, their progress, and their achievements to date.

Inkjet in direct mail

This category will recognise the growing quality and cost-effectiveness of inkjet print in direct mail and related variable data-based applications, where 'white paper' inkjet printing has replaced other digital or hybrid printing processes such as overprinting on offset-printed shells. Submissions must have been entirely printed by cut-sheet or web-fed inkjet, on any substrate. In addition to an assessment of quality in the context of the client brief, budget, and media choice, the judges will be looking for evidence of increased cost-effectiveness, reach/response, or new business developed as a consequence of adopting inkjet print.

Innovation

Any digitally printed job, regardless of process or format, that offers something beyond the current normal practice, whether it is the printing or finishing processes employed, the substrate used, the product format, use of data, or the business model. The judges will be looking at innovations in production, service, and delivery. Please provide a clear description of the challenges faced, innovative approaches taken to meet them, and evidence of the benefits.

Marketing collateral

Marketing materials produced digitally, including personalised campaigns. The judges will be looking at the print and finish quality, the materials used, and the choice of format to provide impact and effectiveness. Details of how digital production improved the offering along with supporting data will be considered. Entries can be commercial work or self-promotional print.

Sustainability

We are looking for print companies that can demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement in sustainability through their policies and working practices. This may range from choice of substrates, inks, and print technologies to waste management, recycling, renewable energy use or generation, transport, and carbon offsetting initiatives, as well as employee and customer engagement and recognition programmes. Please provide a 500-word description of the initiative, and supporting documents such as policies, environmental certifications, or awards may be submitted, along with a sample of any job that you feel particularly demonstrates these values.

Wide and super-wide format

This category encompasses the full gamut of wide-format production, from posters, banners and soft signage, through displays, exhibition and event graphics, to retail, and vehicle and building wraps, on any substrate. Samples that are too big to be submitted by post can be illustrated by photography and supporting written submissions. Please provide details of the challenges faced and your response including design, production, and installation factors.

Women of impact

In a traditionally male-dominated industry like print, women's voices and visibility are often overlooked. This award recognises the exceptional achievements of women who stood up, stood out, and made significant contributions to their business, or the industry. Whether that's through driving business success and resilience, demonstrating leadership, innovation or excellence in their roles, or breaking down barriers to create future opportunities for women in the sector. Tell us why your female colleague should receive this award in 500 words or less, and let's celebrate the impact of women in print.

Judges and judging criteria

Judging will be by a panel headed by a chairperson. Judges are independent industry professionals picked for their relevant sector expertise and knowledge.

Production quality is fundamental and the printer's skills in prepress, printing, and finishing are key criteria. However, a number of the categories require evaluation of the role and success of a print project or service within the broader business or environmental context so **the supporting written submission will be critical**, especially in those categories that do not stipulate that a print sample must be supplied. Please read the above category criteria carefully; the judging panel will not be able to request further information or clarification.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW

Name:.....Company name:.....

Company address:.....
.....

Postcode:.....Telephone:.....

Email:.....

Category entered:.....

Entry title:.....

Customer:.....Permission from customer obtained: ☐

Run length/volume:.....Designer:.....Date produced:.....

Software used:.....
.....

Press/printer used:.....
.....
.....

Finishing equipment used:.....
.....
.....

Substrate(s):.....
.....
.....

What data did you use, if any, to help shape and target the project/campaign (if applicable):.....
.....
.....

☐ I would like to register to receive *Digital Printer* magazine and e-newsletter.

☐ Permission from customer obtained