

drupa Essentials of Print



The print & packaging industry is a living world and once every four years, it is important for all its stakeholders to meet and share for a better future. At drupa, we promise you inspiration, innovation, knowledge sharing and networking. Each visitor will have his own places to go and must-see hotspots. On the way to this event, we release the “drupa essentials”, a series of articles from designers, brands owners, printers, converters, journalists and influencers. These articles will offer visitors an understanding of the print & packaging world that is transforming rapidly under the umbrella of digitalization, automation and sustainability. So, enjoy the reading and give free rein to your instinct and curiosity under the adage “to each his own drupa”.

We are happy to provide you with this expert article and we would be pleased if you publish it.

Be inspired! _____

Your drupa Team

Akif Tatlısu – drupa – More than a Tradefair – It’s all about Sustainability



VITA
Akif Tatlısu

Akif Tatlısu boasts four decades of experience in the printing industry. He received education in printing during both high school and university. He currently serves as a guest lecturer at Istanbul University Cerrahpaşa Technical Sciences Vocational School while also engaging in freelance journalism through his social media platforms under the name "Non Profit Things by Akif Tatlısu."

drupa Essentials of Print December 2023

drupa
content
contributor



Akif Tatlısu – drupa – More than a Tradefair – It's all about Sustainability

drupa is more than a fair. Why do I say that? In essence, I haven't come across any other fair that puts in as much effort for the graphic arts industry and achieves as much success.

drupa will be the most significant trade fair of the year. A journey that began in 1951, this event has now become the leading trade fair for the graphic arts industry. Even after it closes its doors, it continues to influence the industry. For eleven days, it shapes the industry by unveiling emerging trends and innovations - even those that are set to be released in the coming years only. drupa serves as a platform for industry leaders to witness the latest advancements. But what do you think, awaits us at Messe Düsseldorf eight years after the last physical drupa? The answer to this question is most likely already known today.

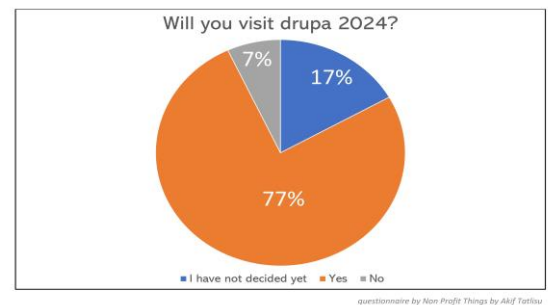
Yes, drupa is more than a trade fair

Because its end doesn't signify the end but rather the beginning of a new four-year process. The organizers consistently nurture the industry until the next edition, employing cross-media strategies, publishing influential articles, and consistently highlighting innovations. Their [blog](#) stands as a testament to their commitment. It holds significant importance for us journalists as it serves as a valuable source. We receive numerous noteworthy headlines and updates from the drupa organizers, which we subsequently share with our readers. drupa also serves as an [extensive networking platform](#) that extends across continents, supporting commercial fairs in different geographic regions and facilitating the dissemination of innovations.. Moreover, drupa trade fair provides areas for innovations, trends, seminars, and conferences that are just as important as the exhibition itself.

I am expecting drupa 2024 to be a record-breaking event

Despite the proliferation of electronic methods, a trade fair remains the ultimate platform for showcasing new technologies. While virtual fairs and virtual demo rooms have become more prevalent nowadays, they fall short in providing the physical experience we need. Understanding often requires physical proximity. That's why we have a desire to see hardware up close, to touch it, to experience tangible outcomes such as layouts, to smell the ink composition, and to explore substrates by rubbing them between our fingers. For these reasons, we require more than just a screen; physical trade fairs are indispensable.

Therefore, the long interval of eight years heightens our anticipation for drupa 2024. If any edition of drupa is expected to be a success, it will be the one taking place in 2024. A survey in Turkey indicates a strong desire to attend.

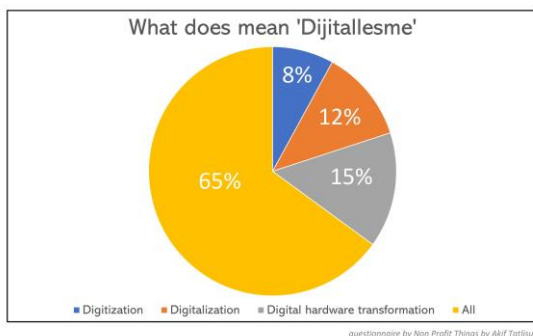


What to expect from drupa 2024?

What are the potential problems and expectations of a printing house today? There is a simple answer: productivity, high quality, and high profitability. These three objectives are at the forefront of technology manufacturers today. There is only one gateway that leads to these three goals, and this gateway has three other doors. Ultimately, this multi-door labyrinth guides us towards a single objective. Does it seem complicated? No, it's actually quite simple. The goal is singular, while the paths are many and long. Our expectation from drupa 2024 is for participants to showcase their own paths for every aspect of the printing industry.

Digitization, Digitalization and Digital Transformation Explained

A blog article was published on drupa blog in September 2022 with the [above title](#). I believe that the article was the best among those published so far. The reason is that although these three concepts share the same denominator (digital), they have three different meanings. In Turkish we use only one word for these three concepts: 'Dijitalleşme' (See [graph](#)). However, this concept encompasses many industries and processes, which can lead to misunderstandings. Let's clarify this a bit and simplify the paths of the labyrinth I mentioned earlier.



Digital printing and finishing technologies

How simple is that? It's just four words, but it carries a vast meaning. For instance, an SRA3-format toner-based machine can do digital printing. Similarly, a desktop printer that prints self-adhesive labels from a 10 cm-wide roll to roll also does digital printing. A 5-meter-wide signage printing machine, a 2-meter-wide corrugated printing press, a 33 cm-wide label printing press, a UV inkjet press that prints in B2 format, an embellishment press that prints in B1 format, a flatbed cutting table, or a laser cutting machine—all of them are digital printing and finishing solutions. But what will a printer (PSP) understand when I say digital printing? The first thing we need to understand at drupa 2024 is this: Customized digital printing technologies have been developed for all printing areas, such as commercial printing, publishing, labels, and packaging. So, make sure to search for these technologies in all halls of drupa, and do not limit yourself to just one hall or the stands of one or two global brands. For example, you can find digital solutions at the stands of conventional printing process companies. You should also visit the stands of digital printing machine manufacturers renowned for producing A4 printers. Because in those stands, you can see machines that compete head-to-head with conventional ones. Therefore, the most important thing that I believe I will see at drupa 2024 is industrial (B2 and B1 format) digital printing and finishing solutions.

Digitization of conventional processes

This might be one of the most important parts of the labyrinth as it holds great importance in paving the way to achieve efficiency and meet the current expectations. This includes various factors such as the utilization of artificial intelligence and machine learning. All of these aspects fall under the umbrella of Industry 4.0. At drupa 2024, one of the key focal points is to witness this transformation. The desired objectives can be summarized as follows:

- Swift production
- Elimination of human errors
- Reduced production costs encompassing labor, materials, and waste

- Expedited delivery times with minimal downtime
- Attainment of the highest quality standards
- Ultimately, maximizing Overall Equipment Efficiency (OEE)

Prepress solutions have long been integrated into this process to accomplish these objectives. Elements like PDF-to-plate conversion, color management, and soft proofing form part of this workflow. Today, the emphasis lies on ensuring this digital workflow operates throughout the entire production process. Consequently, this is the driving force behind numerous new investments. Hence, the second most significant aspect that I anticipate witnessing at drupa 2024 pertains to the implementation of Industry 4.0 solutions in the printing and post-production phases.

A dedicated space for packaging

Yes, the third most important thing that I believe I will see at drupa 2024 is packaging solutions. Specifically, cardboard packaging takes the lead as the flagship. This is because almost all major brand owners, governments, and communities are pushing for the creation of international regulations. Brand owners are also establishing specific procurement regulations. These driving forces, along with global agreements such as green pacts, share a single objective: a sustainable world. Although solutions have been developed in many fields today, cardboard packaging provides the easiest path to achieve this goal in the packaging industry. Therefore, the keyword that will emerge at drupa 2024 is "sustainability", which is very much linked to the aforementioned "digital transformation" and paper and cardboard packaging solutions.

Cardboard packaging

Turkey demonstrates a significant growth in cardboard packaging. According to the Eurostat report, Turkish paper and cardboard industries lead the recycled packaging industry with a share of 85%. According to [data from KASAD](#) (Association of Cardboard Packaging Manufacturers), Turkey's cardboard packaging exports witnessed a 38% increase. However, there was a decline in the last quarter of 2022 and the first quarter of 2023, just like in the rest of the world.

Here's some good news: although there is a decrease in quantity, there is an increase in value. This implies that the digitization of processes in cardboard packaging contributes to efficiency and quality. Leading Turkish cardboard packaging manufacturers are aiming for foreign markets and are increasing their exports. Printers are updating their machinery to align with Industry 4.0 for production, so much so in 2022 and the first quarter of 2023, investments were made specifically in

highly automated offset printing, totaling 162 units (from only two major German manufacturers). What I mean is that besides the exhibitions at drupa 2024, a must-visit point is also the [touchpoint packaging](#) forum

In short

The automation of conventional processes, digital printing, specifically inkjet technology, and cardboard packaging will take center stage as the shining stars of drupa 2024 in line with the principles of Industry 4.0. Their shared goal will be centered around "Sustainable Printing."

Quotes

"Automation, digital printing, and cardboard packaging will be the shining stars of drupa 2024"

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