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## Executive Report | drupa & Digital Package Printing

July 19, 2012, Mike Ferrari

[drupa 2012](#) “aftershocks” can still be felt in the package [printing](#) industry, and its impact will last for years to come. Let’s examine why this is so. [drupa](#) has been elevated as the most important global exhibition for the printing industry. It has held that title for decades, with the exhibition occurring every four years. Original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) have adopted this as their R&D cycle to demonstrate new breakthrough innovations.



Mike Ferrari of Ferrari Innovation Solutions

The geographical location is relatively close to the high growth region of the world. The [Düsseldorf Messe](#) can handle many large OEM exhibits, crowds, and incredibly complicated logistics for 300,000+ attendees. drupa is the “pulse” for the printing industry and will likely remain that way for some time.

According to survey responses, some 40% of drupa attendees made the journey to Düsseldorf specifically for [digital package printing](#). Packaging is a growing segment worldwide. Commercial printers wisely used drupa to investigate the possibility of expanding their services into package printing to re-energize growth. While drupa is very diverse and means different things to different people, no one can deny that its focus and concentration was package printing.

“[Day of Packaging](#)” was the centerpiece for the [drupa cube](#) conference sessions. There was so much interest that this became the most well attended conference of the 14 day exhibition. Speakers from [Procter & Gamble](#) and [Coca-Cola](#) participated, drawing a standing-room-only crowd from around the world. Why did packaging receive all the attention during drupa?

This question has a simple answer. All the new digital technologies launched at drupa 2012 will open new possibilities never before possible in packaging. [Wide-format digital](#) presses at higher speeds make digital package printing a real alternative to analogue. Until drupa, press width was limited to nominally 12 in. Numerous OEMs demonstrated wide web as well as wide sheet-fed presses, nominally 30 in. These digital print press formats will open a gateway into the flexible film and folding carton markets and disrupt analogue-dominant assets. As a result package printing will change forever! What are the leading digital print technologies? Who are the leading OEMs?

Press releases, marketing materials, tweets, YouTube videos, and other media have produced much information. Analyzing all of these is no easy task. Beyond printing, also demonstrated were workflow software and digital finishing break-throughs. [DRUPA Simplified](#) is a report created to take the mystery out of the direction the digital package print industry is taking. As the package print industry is in the midst of great transformation, no one can “lean back” to pause and wait any longer. DRUPA Simplified can help bring clarity to the technologies and OEMs leading the way. You can review a [table of contents](#) and order your copy online.

*About the author—Mike Ferrari is Founder of [Ferrari Innovation Solutions, LLC](#), and package industry consultant. Retired after 32 years of service from [The Procter & Gamble Co.](#), he is dedicated to educate, guide, and inspire those in the packaging industry.*