FESPA
profit for purpose

PRINT CENSUS

2023

Introduction

The FESPA Print Census is a collaborative industry survey conducted by Keypoint Intelligence and FESPA that is designed to provide an in-depth assessment of the key industry segments where digital printing technology is prevalent.

It can also help Print Service Provider(s) offer value-added solutions across a broad range of applications. This is the seventh iteration of a study that was first launched in 2007. Keypoint Intelligence has analyzed the responses to the FESPA Print Census, executed data cleaning processes, compared this year's results to previous surveys, and reported these results in the context of the global industry segments represented by the FESPA community.

With its roots in wide format and screen printing, this research reflects core technologies that have been enabling a wide range of profitable solutions for Print Service Provider(s) as well as equipment suppliers. These are tabulated in the annual forecasts that Keypoint Intelligence has been producing for over 20 years.

According to our most recent forecast data, digital wide format equipment revenues for UV, solvent, and aqueous ink types are expected to exceed €2.2 billion on a global basis by 2026. Equipment revenues are expected to demonstrate a CAGR of 2.1% between 2021 and 2026. This is a relatively flat growth rate that reflects the mature nature of the sign & display industry segment. Despite the maturity of this market, technological undercurrents are creating opportunities for growth as Print Service Provider(s) shift to higher print volume production systems and migrate to alternative ink sets such as latex, sublimation, and UV-curable inkjet.

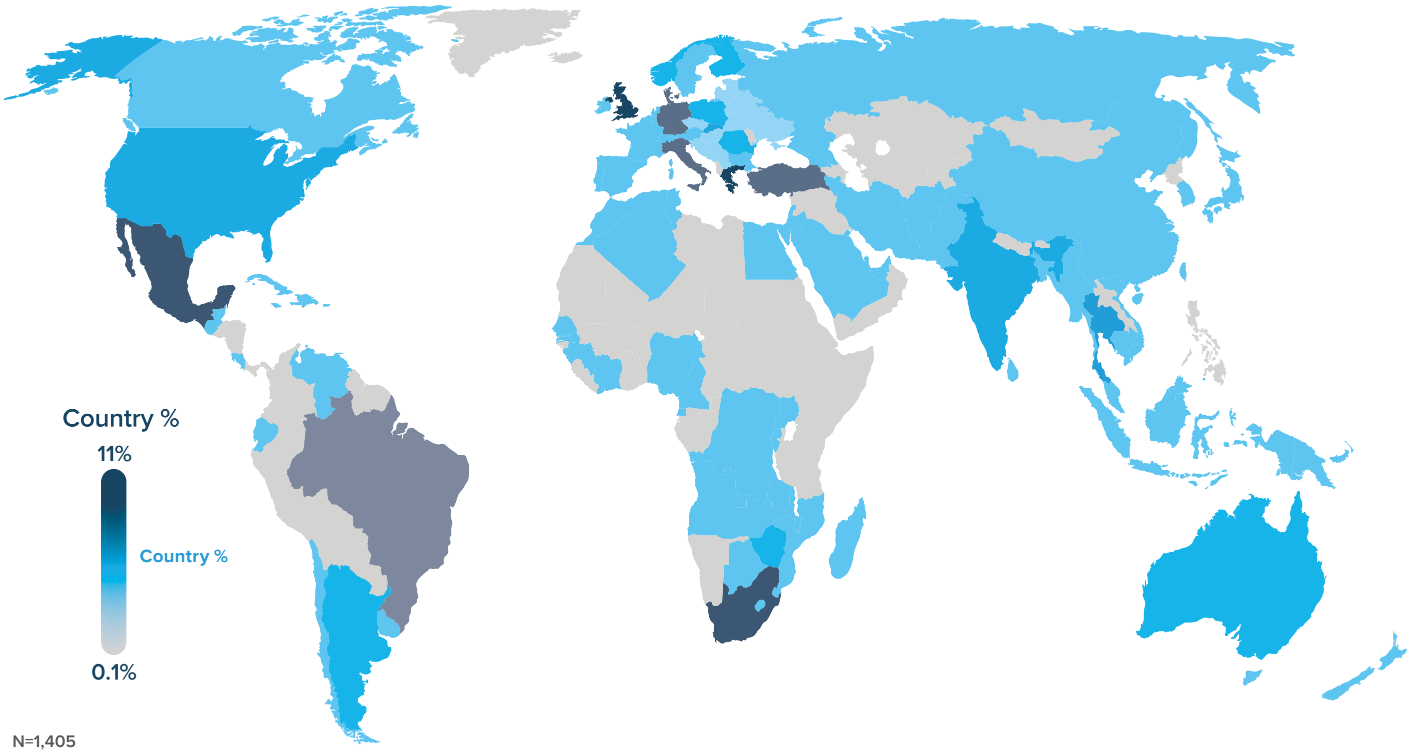
Objectives & Methodology

The objectives of the 2023 FESPA Print Census were to survey FESPA's international membership of print providers and the wider print and sign community to understand their business conditions, technology use, purchasing intentions, and the innovations that will impact their adoption strategies today and in the future. The FESPA Print Census is exploring the transition that Print Service Provider(s) are making from conventional technology to environments where digital printing is integrated into the mix solutions they offer their clients.

Our survey respondents were located all over the world, representing 120 countries from 6 continents. The FESPA Print Census was conducted as an "evergreen" online survey on the FESPA website, as well as in a range of FESPA events around the globe. Our target audiences were FESPA members and event attendees, who are typically Print Service Provider(s) of wide format printing equipment around the world. The survey was offered in Chinese, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Slovak, Spanish, Thai, and Turkish. Nearly 1,780 respondents completed the survey on a worldwide basis. The top participating countries included *Brazil (11%), Germany (9%), Mexico (7%), the United Kingdom (5%), Italy (4%)*, and *Spain (4%)*.

FIGURE 1

COUNTRY DISTRIBUTION



N=1,405

In relation to our 2018 research, the number of respondents is up, as is the number of participating countries. The top 10 distribution has also changed somewhat.

FESPA Print Census (2018 vs. 2023)			
	2018	**2023**	**2 018 vs. 2023**
Number of Respondents	1,405	1,778	**+26.5%**
Number of Countries	102	121	**+19%**
Top 10 Countries (Rank Order)	1. United Kingdom 2. Greece 3. Mexico 4. South Africa 5. Germany 6. Italy 7. Turkey 8. Denmark 9. Brazil 10. Thailand	1. Brazil 2. Germany 3. Mexico 4. United Kingdom 5. Italy 6. Spain 7. South Africa 8. Netherlands 9. France 10. Portugal	

Source: 2018 & 2023 FESPA Worldwide Print Census Reports

General Demographics

It is always important to consider the types of companies that respond to any survey. We believe that the data within the FESPA Print Census is extremely valuable as the respondents cut across a range of industries and mirror the overall structure of the global industry, representing a variety of small, medium-sized, and large establishments.

The key characteristics of our respondents are outlined below. In the 2023 FESPA Print Census, our research team fine-tuned the methodology for identifying respondents by their primary industry segments. Furthermore, respondents were presented with specific questions to reflect trends in their industry segment in addition to being asked some common questions about overall market trends.

TYPE OF ESTABLISHMENT

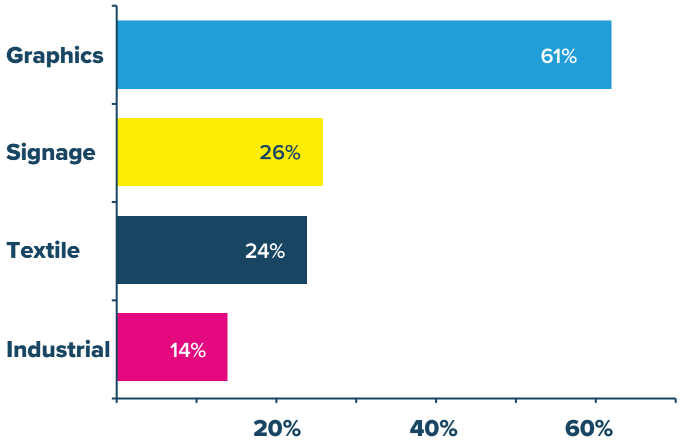
The changes in FESPA membership has brought about a more diverse set of print providers that are connected by a common goal—the desire to embrace new technologies that will enable them to grow their businesses. The expansion in membership has brought a new richness to FESPA events and engagements. Many producers view FESPA as a place to learn about the markets and technologies that they should invest in to support their expansion and locate new sources of revenue streams.

Survey respondents represented a broad range of graphic arts and industrial segments whose primary business revolves around printing. The greatest percentage of survey participants were digital printing specialists within the graphics industry, but other businesses were well-represented too. It should be noted that respondents were allowed to select more than one response when asked about their primary business, so there is some overlap between the groups.

FIGURE 2

PRIMARY BUSINESS

Which of the following categories represents your company's primary business and accounts for most of your revenue?



N = 1,778 Total Respondents

Multiple Responses Permitted

2 Source: *023 FESPA Worldwide Print Census*

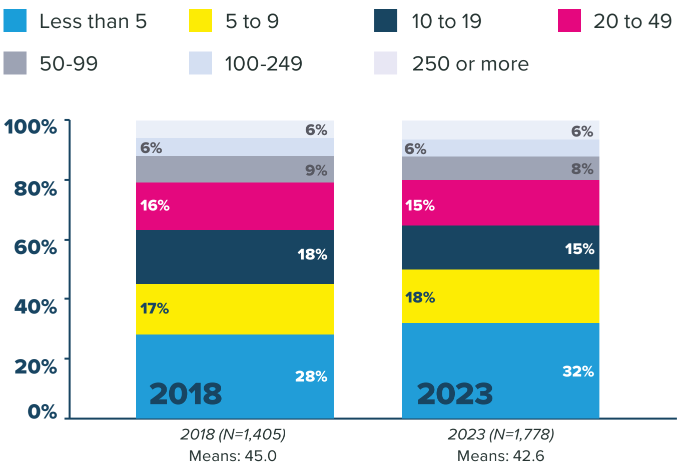
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

Total survey respondents worked for businesses with an average of about 43 people, but this mean was drawn upward by the very large companies in the mix. In fact, 65% of respondents worked for companies with fewer than 20 employees. Our survey sample is well-balanced and representative of Print Service Provider(s) within the overall global industry. In relation to our 2018 FESPA Print Census, company size remained rather consistent (where the overall mean was 45 employees).

FIGURE 3

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES (2018 VS. 2023)

How many employees currently work at your location



2018 (N=1,405)
Means: 45.0

2023 (N=1,778)
Means: 42.6

Base: Total Respondents

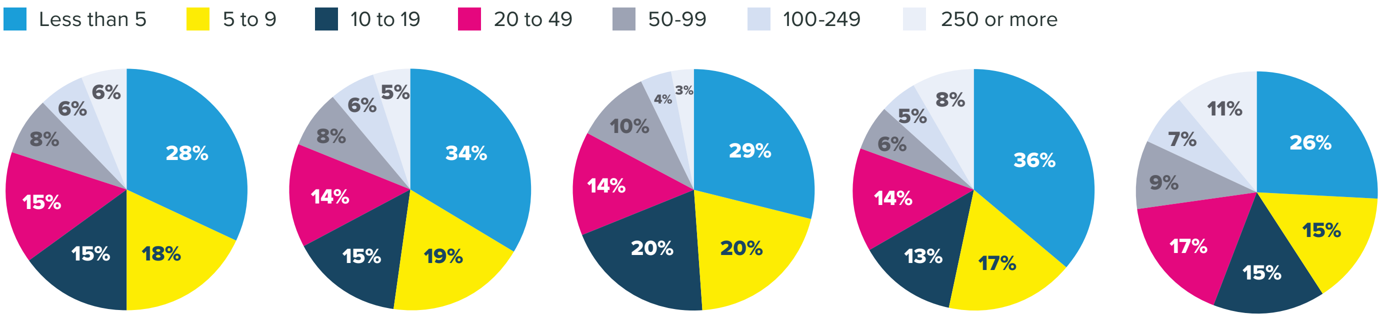
Multiple Responses Permitted

Source: *FESPA Worldwide Print Census Reports*

FIGURE 4

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES (BY TYPE OF BUSINESS)

Which of the following categories represents your company's primary business and accounts for most of your revenue?

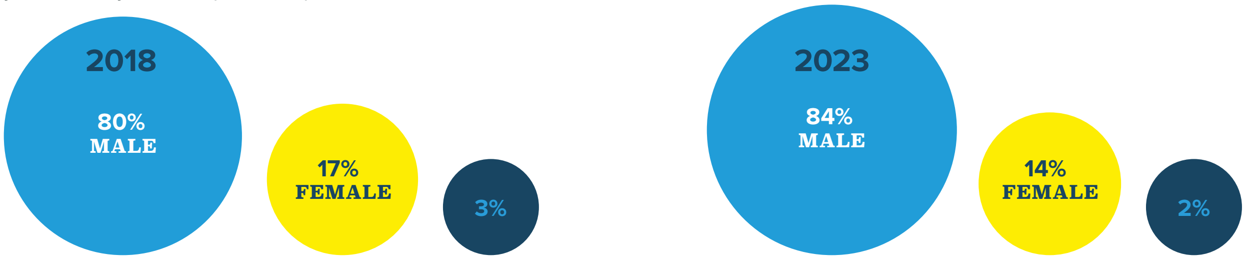


Total (N=1,778) Graphics (N=1,093) Signage (N=455) Textile (N=420) Industrial (N=245)

Base: Total Respondents | Source: *2023 FESPA Worldwide Print Census*

AGE AND GENDER

The average age of respondents has increased slightly since our last survey, rising from 44 years to 47 years. This year's respondent pool is also a bit more skewed toward males.



Source: 2018 & 2023 FESPA Worldwide Print Census Reports

PRINT REVENUES

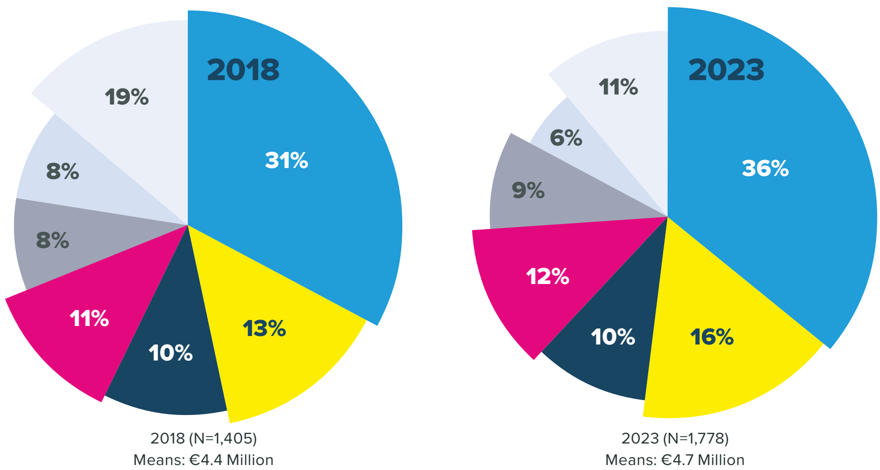
Respondents to this year's survey reported an average annual turnover of €4.7 million for print services, which is up from €4.4 million during 2018. This represents an overall increase of about 7%, which is encouraging news for the print industry.

FIGURE 5

ANNUAL REVENUE FOR PRINTING (2018 VS. 2023)

What are your company's annual revenues for printing and related services? (Mean in €Millions)

- Under €500K
- €500K to €999K
- €1.0M to €1.9M
- €2.0M to €4.9M
- €5.0M to €19.9M
- €20.0M or more
- Don't know



Base: 2018 Total Respondents Except Packaging and Labels / 2023 All Respondents
Source: *FESPA Worldwide Print Census Reports*

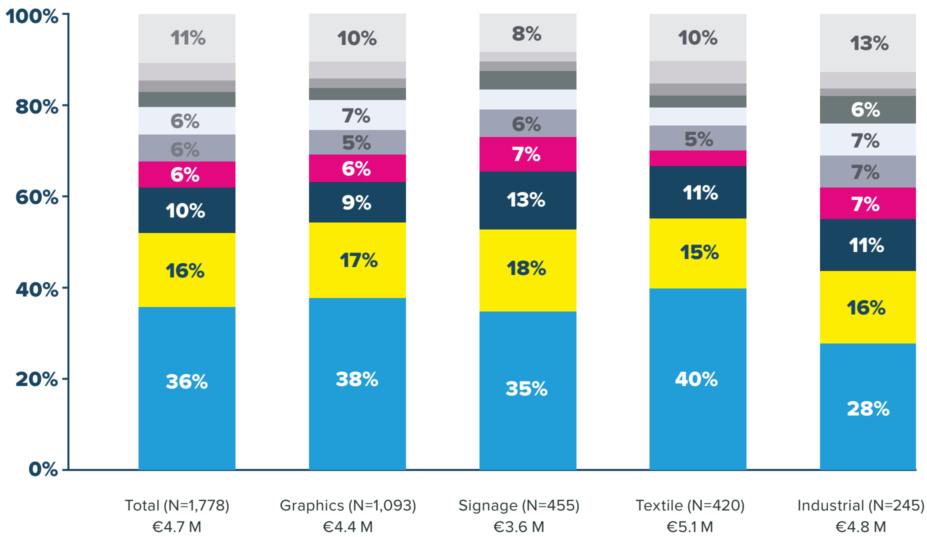
By type of business, signage companies reported the lowest print-related revenues while textile businesses reported the highest.

FIGURE 6

ANNUAL REVENUE FOR PRINTING (BY TYPE OF BUSINESS)

What are your company's annual revenues for printing and related services? (Mean in €Millions)

- Under €500K
- €500K to €999K
- €1.0M to €1.9M
- €2.0M to €2.9M
- €3.0M to €4.9M
- €5.0M to €9.9M
- €10.0M to €19.9M
- €20.0M to €49.9M
- €50M or more
- Don't know



Base: Total Respondents | Source: *2023 FESPA Worldwide Print Census*

Trends & Business Conditions

FESPA membership and show attendance ranges across many segments, so it is important to provide a clear representation of all these segments. As is the case in many industries, some trends are common to all respondents. Therefore, before we turn our attention to the individual segments, this section reviews key trends that reflect the responses of all interviewees.

BUSINESS CONDITIONS

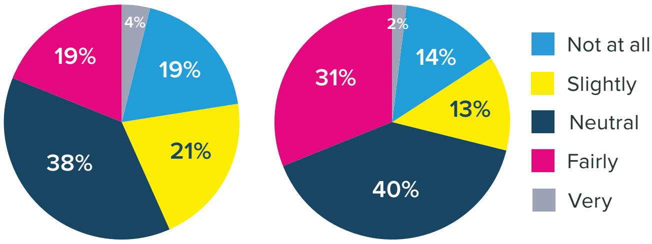
Despite the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Print Service Provider(s) are generally optimistic about their own businesses as well as the industry at large. As is often the case, Print Service Provider(s) are generally more bullish on their businesses – 71% of respondents were fairly or very optimistic about their own businesses, compared to 57% that were equally optimistic about the industry as a whole.

With our current track record of ongoing research, we can say with certainty that Print Service Provider(s) are more confident about their own businesses than the overall industry. This optimism is manifesting itself into increased technological investments and purchasing plans as firms strive to take their businesses to the next level.

FIGURE 7

OPTIMISM ABOUT INDUSTRY & BUSINESS

How optimistic are you about the future of the industry you serve/your own business?

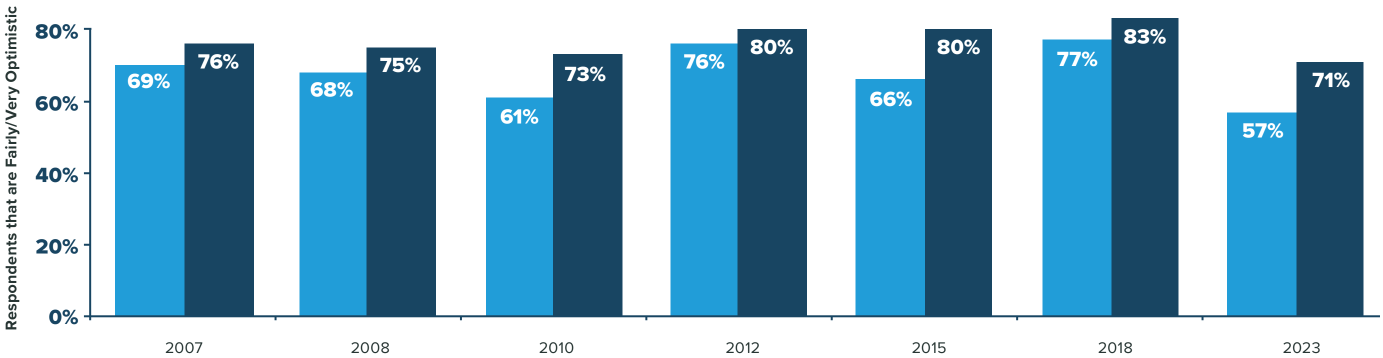


N = 1,778 Total Respondents | Source: *2023 FESPA Worldwide Print Census*

FIGURE 8

OPTIMISM ABOUT INDUSTRY & BUSINESS (2007-2023)

How optimistic are you about the future of the industry you serve/your own business?



Base: Total Respondents | Source: *FESPA Worldwide Print Census Ongoing Research*

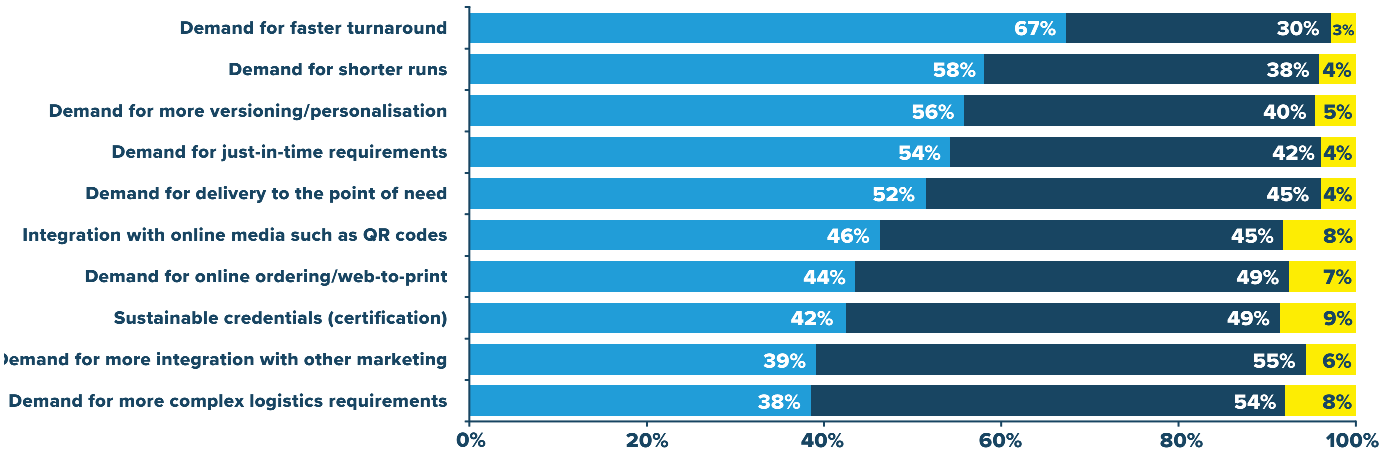
CHANGES IN KEY CUSTOMER REQUIREMENTS

There is no question that customer demand for mass customisation continues to drive the adoption of digital printing technologies. Core customer requirements include fast turnaround, short-run printing, increased use of versioning ; personalisation and just-in-time manufacturing. These requirements have been quite important for several years now.

FIGURE 9

CHANGES IN CLIENT DEMANDS

How are client demands for the following changing over time?



N = 1,778 Total Respondents | Source: *2023 FESPA Worldwide Print Census*

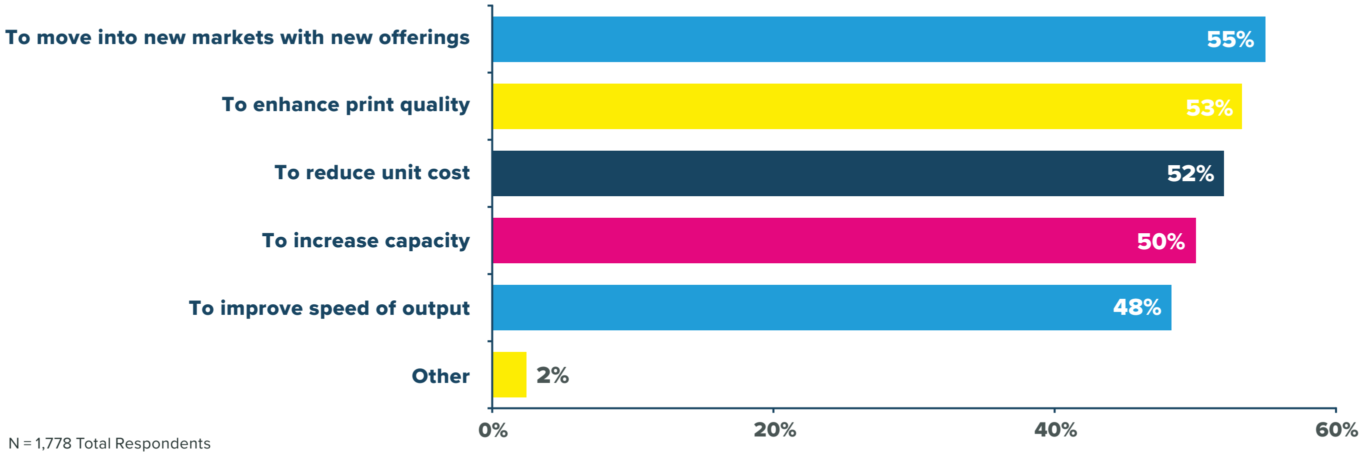
Digital printing technologies and the workflow associated with onboarding jobs and processing them in a seamless operation are critical components for Print Service Provider(s) as they strive to innovate and position their businesses for future growth. Many customers demand a 48-hour shipping timeframe, and Print Service Provider(s) must embrace digital printing and automated workflow tools to meet this requirement.

Correlating their need for a fast turnaround and just-in-time manufacturing, respondents reported that their top reasons for investing in new technologies were to enter new markets a nd to enhance print quality. Today's equipment suppliers are advancing quality management in their devices, improving ink formulation, and developing media that is designed for a wider range of applications.

FIGURE 10

RATIONALE BEHIND TECHNOLOGICAL INVESTMENTS

What are the reasons behind your planned technological investments?



N = 1,778 Total Respondents
Source: *2023 FESPA Worldwide Print Census*
Multiple Responses Permitted

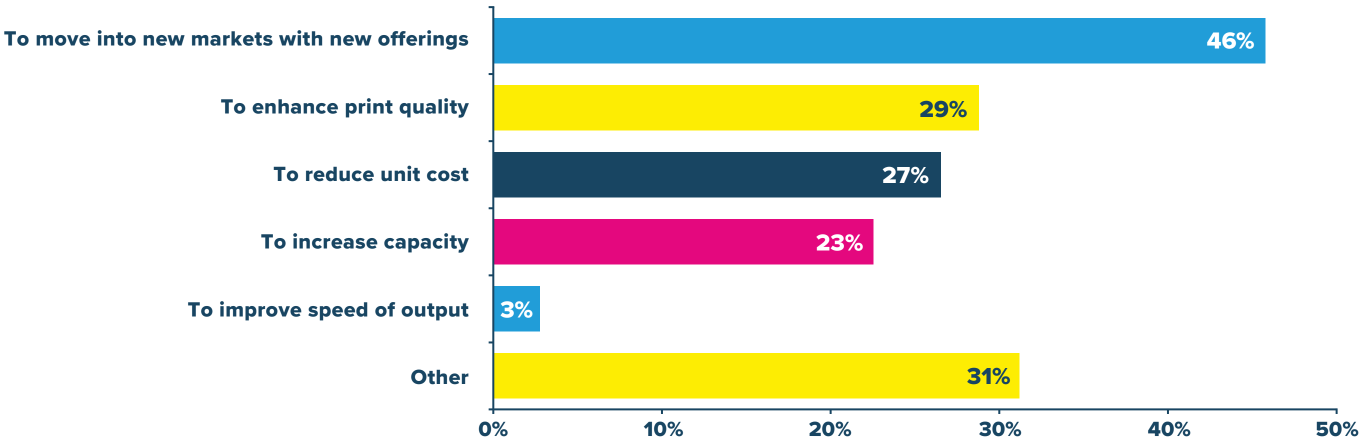
Print Service Provider(s)' technological investments are certainly important, but we also wanted to explore non-technological investments that they were making. Not surprisingly, well-trained staff members topped the list at 46%. Employee training is key to equipment maintenance, customer satisfaction, and efficient production—even if the technology is not always cooperating!

The next tier of investments is also expected as a natural development in companies that are investing in digital technologies. Investments like e-commerce portals, interactive customer collaboration tools, and digital asset management are a priority for efficient production and the ability to produce jobs with more automation and fewer human errors. They are critical in environments where large numbers of jobs must be effectively managed.

FIGURE 11

RECENT NON-TECHNOLOGICAL INVESTMENTS

Which of the following investments have you made in the past 2 years?

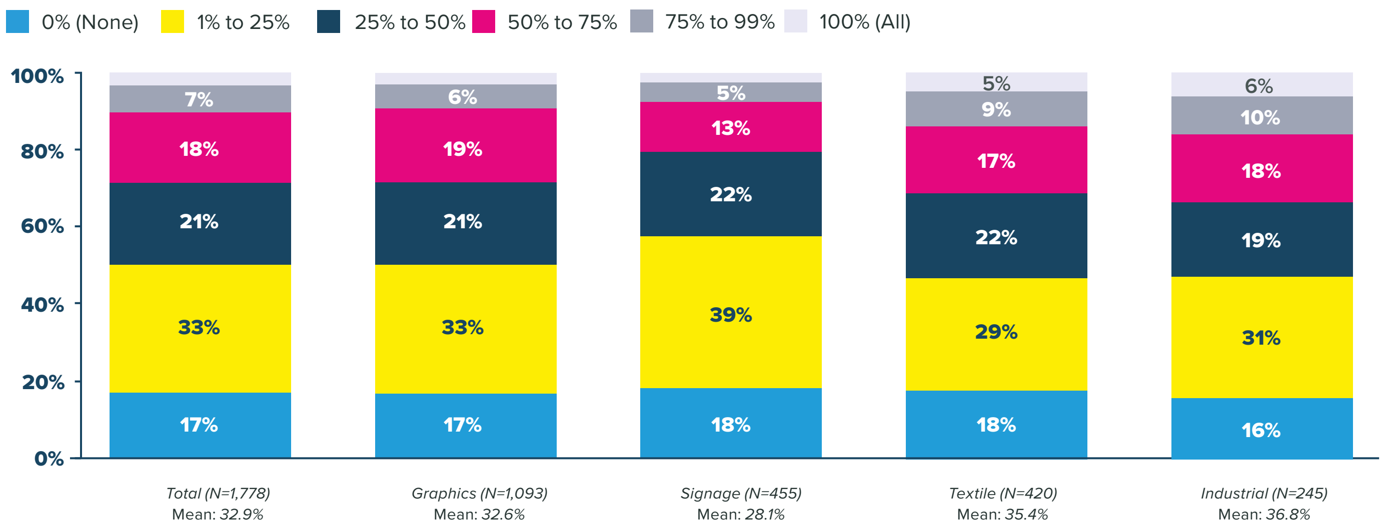


N = 1,778 Total Respondents
Source: *2023 FESPA Worldwide Print Census*
Multiple Responses Permitted

FIGURE 12

DEMAND FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRODUCTS (BY TYPE OF BUSINESS)

Which of the following best describes the share of your customers that are demanding environmentally friendly products?



Base: Total Respondents
Source: *2023 FESPA Worldwide Print Census*

THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Our respondents represent a diverse range of producers from a variety of industries. Despite their differences, they all share a commitment to the environment. On average, total respondents reported that about a third of their customers were currently demanding eco-friendly products. This share was lowest among signage respondents and highest among industrial firms.

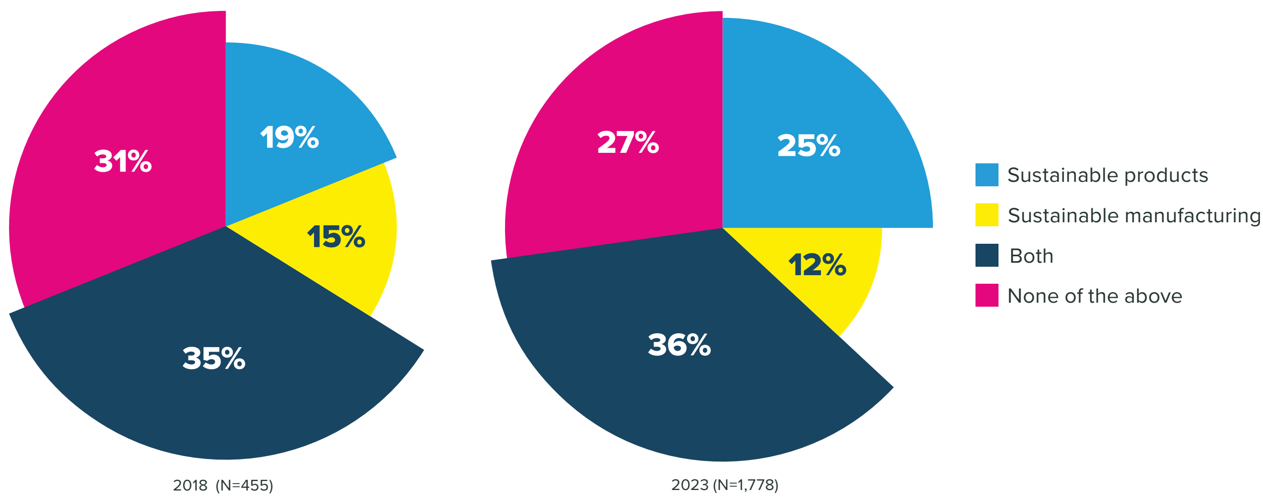
Most respondents indicated that sustainable manufacturing and/or sustainable products are desirable. It should be noted that the share of respondents who reported that no sustainability initiatives were requested declined from 31% in 2018 to 27% in 2023.

Since the environment is a top priority, we sought to better understand the specific actions respondents have taken to improve their environmental friendliness. The top responses included energy efficient/certified equipment, the use of VOC free inks, and sourcing equipment from eco-friendly suppliers.

FIGURE 13

REQUESTED SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES (2018 VS. 2023)

Which of the following best describes the type of sustainability your customers are requesting?

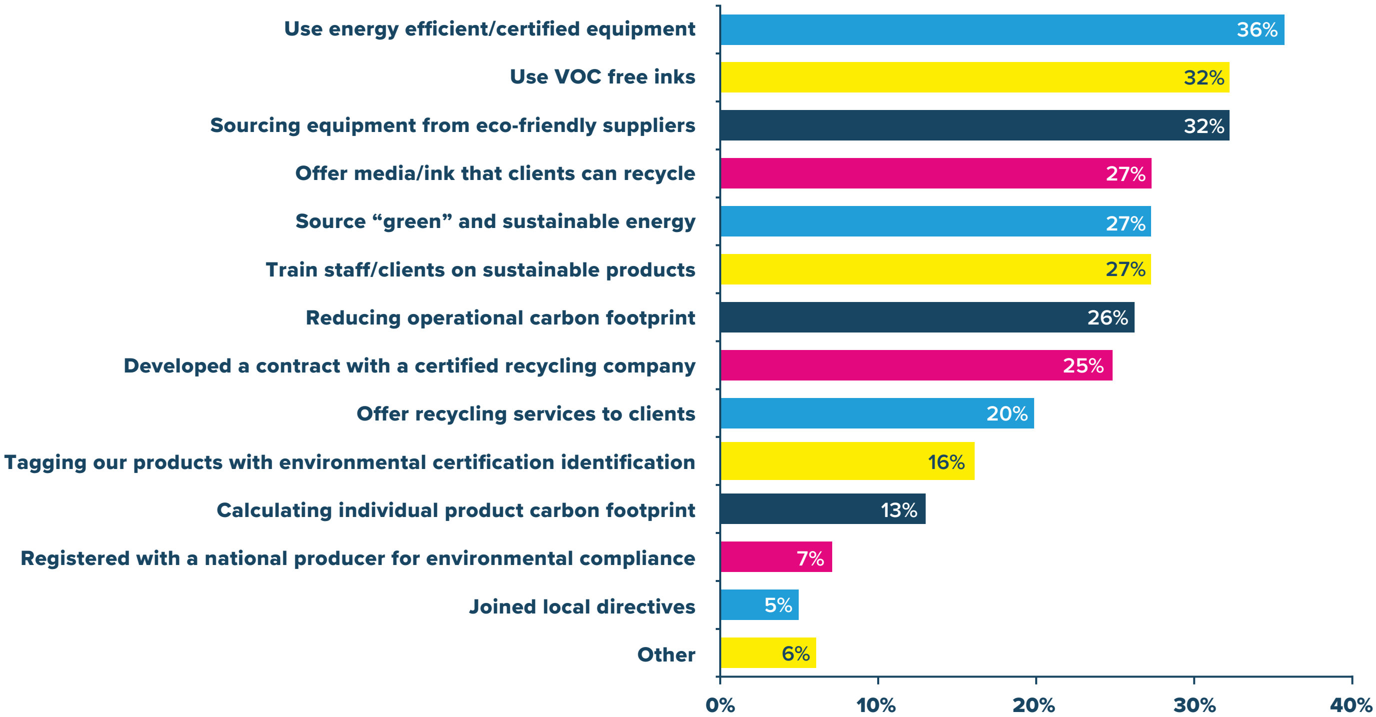


Base: Total Respondents
Source: *FESPA Worldwide Print Census Reports*

FIGURE 14

ECO-FRIENDLY ACTIONS

Which of the following actions have you taken to make your operations more environmentally friendly?



N = 1,778 Total Respondents
Source: *2023 FESPA Worldwide Print Census*

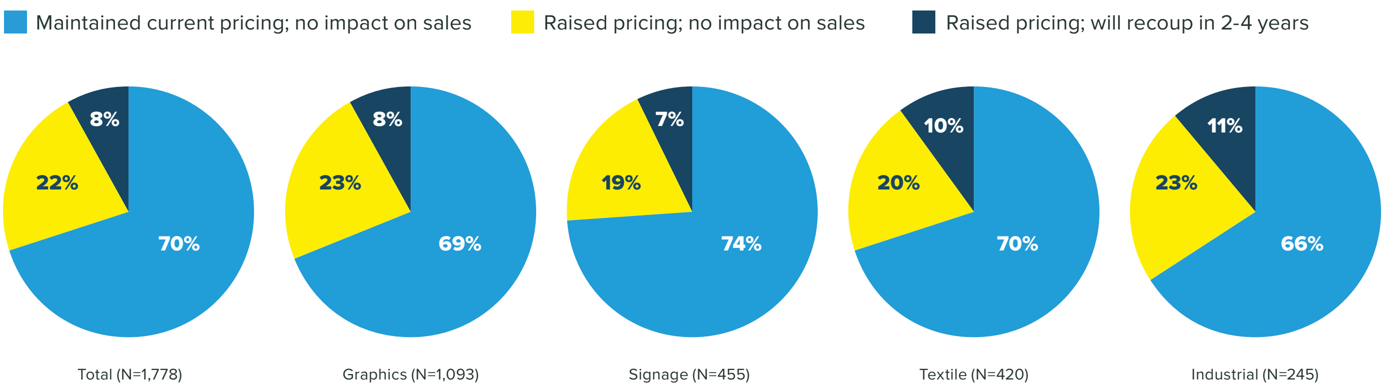
Multiple Responses Permitted

As we considered the activities that Print Service Provider(s) are taking to meet today’s increasingly stringent environmental standards, we also asked how the investment in more sustainable products affected our respondents’ bottom lines. Fortunately, most Print Service Provider(s) reported that this investment had no negative impact on business and that they were able to maintain their current pricing. About 8% of total respondents needed to raise their prices, but soon expected to recoup the expenses from the investment. The differences by type of business were not pronounced, but industrial respondents reported that sustainable practices had a slightly stronger impact on their sales.

FIGURE 15

IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY (BY TYPE OF BUSINESS)

How has your environmental strategy affected your business?



Base: Total Respondents
FESPA Worldwide Print Census Reports