



IMI Europe Limited  
2 Manor Farm  
Milton Road  
Impington  
Cambridge CB4 9NF  
England

Telephone +44 1223 236920  
Fax +44 1223 235901  
Email sales@imieurope.com

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Welcome to the 'Wild East' IMI Event Focuses on Chinese Markets & Opportunities**

The 'Wild East' is how Stewart Partridge, Managing Director of Web Consulting referred to China at a special seminar hosted by IMI in Barcelona last week.

Web Consulting's latest research study on China will be available later this year, but IMI seminar attendees were given a preview of the report's findings.

With the world's largest population and an economy growing at 7-8% per annum, China has the world's largest outdoor advertising industry with over 1 million billboard sites – that's 3-4 times larger than the US. In addition, China's POP retail market is also developing rapidly.

Stewart Partridge, a recognised expert on the Chinese graphics market, believes that the grand format and wide format market in China will be bigger and more dynamic than in any other country. "It will also become the most competitive and some major new global manufacturers of media, printers and software will arise," he added.

With China destined to become the world's number one market for printed advertising (and packaging too) it poses a mixture of threats and opportunities to companies in the West. According to Stewart Partridge, we can expect increased competition, especially on machines, and reduced margins as the sheer size of the Chinese market affects regional and global pricing. But as many companies are discovering, China also represents a market of opportunity – particularly for partnerships. For example, at SGIA last month, we saw that many OEMs are expanding and adding value to their product ranges by sourcing printers from China, providing the global branding strength and distribution expertise lacking amongst many Chinese manufacturers.

The low profitability of the domestic market for Chinese printer companies has provoked a shift in attitude. The leading manufacturers are now learning to sell on quality and reliability, rather than simply on price alone. Some are also beginning to realise that the grand format and wide format graphics market is overcrowded and that not all existing players will survive. In fact the process of rationalisation has already begun – several grand format printer companies have been liquidated. As a result, some innovative leaders are exploring novel industrial printing applications such as textiles, packaging and labelling.

The focus on China continued with a presentation at the IMI Ink Jet conference from CGATE, a trading company specialised in promoting trade in high value products for the digital printing and imaging industries from China to the West. Andi Edan, CGATE's Marketing Manager, outlined the potential pitfalls of sourcing products from China, but emphasised that, with careful research, good quality products could be found. CGATE's carefully selected line of products includes aluminium, PVC, acrylics, large format media and lightboxes.

Finally, Stewart Partridge posed three critical questions to the IMI audience:

Has your company got a strategic plan, which takes account of developments in China?

Have you a tactical plan to protect weaknesses and exploit opportunities created by China?

Are you in the market, which will (may) come to dominate the future dynamics of the industry?

Clearly, if Western companies are to participate in the 'Wild East' they need to address their market position urgently.

## **ENDS**

High-resolution photographs (300 dpi RGB JPEGs) to accompany this news release are available for download on the IMI web site [www.imieurope.com](http://www.imieurope.com)



Stewart Partridge, Managing Director – Web Consulting



Andi Edan, Marketing Manager - CGATE

### **About IMI**

The Information Management Institute runs the largest and most comprehensive conference and seminar programme in the digital printing industry. Each year over 2,000 industry technical and management personnel from over 600 companies attend around 20 events covering all forms of digital printing.

### **Contacts**

Mike Willis, Managing Director, IMI Europe. Telephone: +44 1223 235900

Email: [mike@imieurope.com](mailto:mike@imieurope.com) Web: [www.imieurope.com](http://www.imieurope.com)