

# FESPA innovates with green presidency

By Martin Kugler

In October, during the Global Print Expo 2021 in Amsterdam, FESPA announced that Christophe Aussenac had been officially confirmed FESPA's 18th president for a three year term of office. He had already been a FESPA board member since 2014 and is also in charge of FESPA France, the national association serving the French digital and wide format printing industry.

Christophe Aussenac replaces the outgoing president Christian Duyckaerts, whom he had seconded as vice-president since 2017. Christian Duyckaerts, also a FESPA board member, has been appointed FESPA's Asia Ambassador and is actively involved in FESPA Belgium, the Belgian national association.

## New challenges

Environmental concerns will be the most pressing of the numerous challenges the new president of FESPA will be facing when addressing the many needs of the printing community. Trade enquiries and calls for tender nowadays will frequently question suppliers about their environmental policies and certified compliance with ISO 14001 environmental management. ECOVADIS certification is also increasingly in demand as a reliable source for business sustainability ratings. In their own words ECOVADIS' mission is "to deliver the world's most trusted sustainability ratings, enabling businesses to reduce risk, drive performance and improve environmental and social outcomes."

## More emphasis on environmental responsibility

In his inaugural statement Christophe Aussenac declared: "As a speciality printer myself, I believe that FESPA has a vital role to play in supporting our global community to enable it to continue to evolve, innovate and rise to the challenges and opportunities that face us, in particular the imperative to place more emphasis on environmental responsibility." FESPA endeavours to inform and guide its



Christophe Aussenac, FESPA's new president.

members on how to best tackle these new challenges. In an industry that aims for sustainability and that watches its environmental impact, business decisions will be determined by these considerations. FESPA will support its members with comprehensive industry updates and technical webinars to enable them to keep abreast with the latest developments.

## Innovations and savings

Christophe Aussenac sees a number of opportunities for the printing community in this approach that will in time bring true benefits through innovation and savings, i.e.:

- lower energy consumption
- less waste
- better managed resources
- improved productivity
- coherent standards
- customer loyalty
- staff loyalty.

Rejuvenation and increased professionalism FESPA's second priority with the new presidency will be to rejuvenate and professionalize the printing industry. On the outside the printing trade is often perceived as outdated. Christophe Aussenac sees it as his job to attract younger professionals and to increase the industry's visibility. Working with

schools and other educational institutions, FESPA aims to widen interest in the profession and increase the number of printing specialists in the industry.

## 'Mediapplicator'

An initial achievement is the new professional qualification (CQP) as Mediapplicator in France for installers of self-adhesive film and printed media. Three students, who previously obtained a CAP in signage and graphic design, started their CQP Mediapplicator training in 2020 at the Passeport Forma training centre in Béthune in northern France. When these three students passed their certificate exams in August and received various job offers, Christophe Aussenac proudly commented: "We were used to training employees on the job, without any formal apprenticeship in the technical or organizational basics. Today, this certification training course enhances the value of our jobs and represents true recognition of our profession." Other professional qualifications endorsed by FESPA in France are large format digital printer and two levels of screen printer.

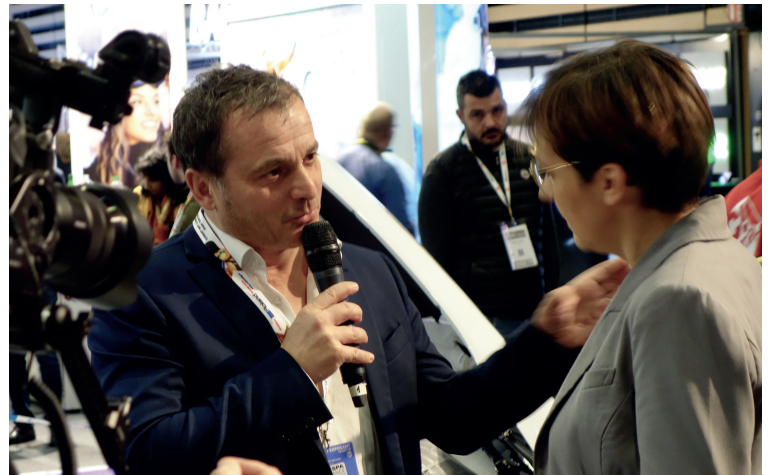
## International exchanges

On a wider level, Christophe Aussenac is in favour of international exchanges, following the model of the Erasmus programme for university students and aiming for an equivalence of qualifications between EU states. This would encourage mobility in the labour market and open up wider job opportunities.





Production floor at ATC main site in France.



Christophe Aussenac interviewed at C!Print in Lyons.

### Founding director of ATC

Beyond FESPA, Christophe Aussenac is a founding director of ATC, a business based on the outskirts of Lyons which he founded with his associate Robert Combes in 1991. From sign making and lettering they soon branched out into vehicle marking and wrapping as well as wide format digital printing. In a constantly changing and increasingly competitive market the company faced two challenging opportunities. In the 1990s, with the industry diversifying into digital inkjet printing with many new materials, the traditional craft of sign makers was changing significantly. In the following decade Christophe Aussenac witnessed the emergence of environmental concerns and in 2008 he initiated his eco-attitude project to differentiate his business from competitors operating in the same field.

### Measurements during Covid

"The Covid outbreak of 2020 presented many previously unknown challenges and led us to rethink our business strategies. Instead of being a victim to the pandemic we embarked on a positive course of action," Christophe Aussenac explained.

The first step was to switch to a new management software system. ATC opted for the MultiPress software from Dateline, which

is aimed at graphic and print production companies and integrates all administrative, commercial, financial and logistical business processes, together with production and reporting, into a single MIS/ERP system. The software, referred to internally as Optima, is expected to considerably improve efficiency and flexibility within the company's processes.

### ATC = workshop of media for ideas

The next step of the rethink was to overhaul the brand image of ATC as a business. The company is now presented as a "workshop of media for ideas" rather than simply as a producer and installer of media. The concept was introduced with the launch of a new visual advertising campaign illustrating ATC's four principal business activities: large-scale signage, events, exhibitions and vehicle wraps.

Finally, ATC certification under ISO 14001 encompasses a comprehensive policy of environmental measures covering five areas:

- full compliance with environmental legislation and regulations

- control and reduction of energy consumption
- share awareness of environmental objectives with staff, suppliers and customers
- reducing and recycling waste materials
- innovation and investment in new technologies.

### Closing statement

Christophe Aussenac emphasised once more that environmental concerns have also had an impact on his company. As far as ATC is concerned ISO certification is a responsible approach adopted by the entire workforce and supported by effective action: a managed carbon footprint, waste separation, waste recycling, use of electric vehicles etc. The company has benefited from ISO 14001 certification for its environmental management system since 2013, covering production, administration and installation activities at its sites in Lyons and Paris.

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ATC headquarters near Lyons, France.



ATC printing wide-format on a VUTEK.

## Interview

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