



Federation of Printing, Packaging, Signage & Visual Communication

# NEWS

## Printing SA's Inaugural Women In Print Event Inspires And Empowers Attendees

The Women In Print events, hosted by Printing SA on 19 and 25 August, were a major success, with attendees feeling inspired and motivated by the thought leadership and discussions by successful women business owners and women in the printing industry who shared invaluable experience, insights and wisdom. Sign Africa was a proud media partner of the event.

For the first time in Printing SA's 111 year history, it hosted an event that honoured the 'Women in Print,' across all the sub-sectors that the association represent, who have emerged as stalwarts and heavyweights in an industry that has been male dominated for over a century.

The luncheon focus consisted of two parts, the first part took the form of a panel discussion, looking at: Disruption – 'Don't just survive but thrive in a production world'. Part two saw the young mavericks of the industry take the stage and unpack how they have managed to forge careers in a production world that is integrating and accommodating the diversity of the next generation at a very slow pace.

Dr Abdool Majid Mahomed, CEO of Printing SA, said, 'We salute women who stand tall and are able to engage in C-Suite positions, adding real value to the companies they own and manage. When we talk about the rise of women, it does not imply the fall of men, as every single person can play a role in forging gender parity. Gender balance is not solely a women's issue, it is a human right's issue as females make up half of humanity. It is also an economic issue as the disparities of the past still have to be dealt with.'

**Panellist snippets:**

Teresa Adinolfi, Founder and Managing Director of Redfern Group, had advice for business owners: 'Recognition is important. Without our team, we have nothing. They are the most important asset in my life. No machine or anything else supersedes our team. You have to recognise (your employees). When things go wrong, we work together to change and fix it and not repeat it. But it needs to be done with respect and kindness.'

Adinolfi also had personal advice: 'Make choices because you believe in yourself and who you are, and be the best you can be. If you are true to



Linda Frohlich, Sasfin Holdings; Michelle Robson, Rotunda; Heilet Grobler, UVO Communications; Teresa Adinolfi, Redfern Group and Alinah Fosi, Government Printing Works.



Dr Abdool Majid Mahomed, CEO of Printing SA, addresses attendees at the Women In Print Johannesburg event.

yourself and if you honour your choices, that will improve your mental health, and your whole being.'

Heilet Grobler, Managing Director, UVO Communications, said younger women wanting to enter the industry need to expand their definition of the printing industry to see the full range of opportunities. 'The industry has really expanded and people think that print is just on paper, but there are so many options. If you research the opportunities in print, it involves promotional items, banners, visual communication, design and much more.'

Grobler also touched on her experience as a single mother with two children: 'There are structures you can use, and don't feel bad for using them. You are the breadwinner, and you have to provide. These days, there are au pairs and Ubers. I also often brought my children to meetings. Do it, there are no rules. It's also very important to keep to boundaries. Yes, you do work outside of office hours – if you want to be successful, you have to walk that extra mile. So I work late at night but between 6 and 8pm, we have family time.'

Alinah Fosi, Chief Executive Officer of Government Printing Works, advised women to carve out me-time. 'Sit, meditate, reflect and recharge on your own. It does a great deal of healing and is therapy for your soul. Because (as women) we get so concerned about everyone else and not ourselves.

When you're done with me-time, play. Laughter is a way of releasing as well. So laugh, play, go out and take a break, work will still be there the following day. Plan that weekend away with the family, because they also need you.'

Michelle Robson, CEO, Rotunda, spoke about her biggest challenge: 'I'd say to my factory manager 'My customer wants his job', and the factory manager would say 'Well, you can get it in six weeks' time'. It was easier to run things simultaneously and get better production stats.

I had to fight him on everything and say that what the customer wants is more important than his production board. I eventually got it right, and now we're a sales generated company and not a production driven company.



Women In Print Cape Town event.



Kristin Mento, TopInc Print Imagination; Jean Lloyd, Keypoint Intelligence; Kaylene Lloyd, Offernet; Chantal Donnelly, Hirt & Carter; Heidie-Mari Middell, KYOCERA Document Solutions South Africa; Teresa Adinolfi, Redfern Group; Charnia Yapp, Sign Africa; and Anja Kirton, FUJIFILM Graphic Communication South Africa.

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