A bulletin from the world of global media distribution

*Edited by DistriPress, Zurich*

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ACTIVISM / Distribution / France

**France Messagerie joint election promotion helps drive sales**

French press distributor France Messagerie’s first ever
A joint promotion with fellow distributor MLP for the French presidential election has helped drive sales of political publications over the election period.

The promotion saw the distributors partner with 22 titles – both magazines and newspapers – and 3,000 retailers across the country. This included international title The Economist, as well as native French publications.

It ran from 28 March until 30 April, covering both first and second rounds of the presidential election.

“The election is the most critical time for French people and democracy in France,” says Nathalie Sönnichsen, commercial director at France Messagerie. “We wanted to make something very new and very big. We proposed that MLP join with us to have a very big, attractive promotion for retailers.”

The promotion was designed to combat online media bubbles to allow for different ideas to be discussed ahead of the election.

“We believe the retailer’s shop is the answer to the internet's filter bubble,” says Stephanie de Haldat, director of communication at France Messagerie. “It is important to show customers that there are a lot of opinions about politics and other things, and the root of this promotion idea is to put the newspaper shop at the centre of political debate.”

Posters, stickers and shelf tags were displayed within retailers’ premises. The posters also featured the names of the 22 titles involved in the promotion.

“We've compared these 3,000 retailers to the other retailers and we can see that those 3,000 retailers have better sales than the others,” says Nathalie.
The press in France is a decreasing market, and Covid has made it even worse - it's decreasing 8 to 10% every year,” adds Nathalie. “But the election coverage and the war in Ukraine have increased sales for newspapers. We know that this trend is not the normal trend, but these events have made the figures stabilise within a decreasing market.”

The distributor is planning a similar promotion for other national events such as the cycling event Le Tour de France. “These events can be some appointments to make something for retailers and for our publisher editors,” says Nathalie. “We will study this promotion for the presidential election to make others with the same dynamic, but the importance for us is to have publishers, editors and retailers on board.”

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E-commerce first for South Africa

On The Dot, one of the largest multichannel logistics companies in South Africa, is reaching out to the country’s underserved corners. It is launching the first-of-its-kind in South Africa - an e-commerce platform for books and magazines called 4ME.
The footprint for traditional magazine and book retailers has shrunk over the past couple of years, so it’s harder for many communities in South Africa to get hold of a broader range of new or specialist magazines. International titles are also in demand, but tricky to find. This new platform, headed up by On the Dot’s Alexis Tobias, addresses that issue, explains André Van Tonder, general manager at On the Dot.

“Regular access to titles is a problem in South Africa and this addresses that gap in the market. E-commerce in general is growing locally, just like it is around the world, but we don’t have big international platforms available to local online shoppers.”

Ensuring that this new platform is price competitive was an important factor when developing it, Van Tonder explains. Getting logistical processes in place can be quite costly, so striking the right balance between overheads and delivery costs was critical. On The Dot already has a strong logistics network, which made the process easier, but ensuring that it reached every corner of South Africa was the biggest challenge.

“It’s a massive country that, in certain areas, is scarcely populated. We knew we had to reach these areas. Now you can sit in a very small village in South Africa, order your favourite magazine, and it will be delivered to you within three days.” Furthermore, says Van Tonder, “We do believe that we're going to get attention for our weekly magazine portfolio, and therefore the speed of the supply chain is crucial.”

The platform launches in early May.

onthedot.co.za
DistriPress Virtual Forum: AI, IoT and net zero publishing

Should you be thinking about the Metaverse? Is the Internet of Things (IoT) useful to the publishing industry? How can we make the most of AI? John Straw, internet entrepreneur, will address the questions of technology and disruption at the DistriPress Virtual Forum on 11 May.

John is a senior advisor to Mckinsey and Co and IBM Watson IoT, and has a portfolio of investments in the space. In 2017, he became a non-executive director for Provident Financial plc. He is a blogger on disruptive technology and an AI contributor to The Economist.
At the Virtual Forum, John will share insights on AI, the Internet of Things, 3D printing and augmented reality in the context of publishing and distribution. He is a public speaker who makes the complex simple, educating businesses on change and disruption. A panel discussion will follow the presentation, where delegates can discuss the opportunities these technologies can offer the sector.

Following this, Gavin Miller, from carbon management and sustainability practice Auditel (UK), will look at net-zero and sustainability solutions for media, publishing, marketing, digital and events companies.

Having worked in strategic, commercial and corporate marketing roles for companies such as BBC Worldwide and Universal Pictures, he headed up several publishing, media, digital and events companies and developed expertise in transformation, sustainable procurement and strategic and commercial development, which he now channels into helping companies move towards net-zero.

The breakout session that follows his talk will give delegates the opportunity to discuss their own journeys towards net zero and the next steps they can take to go further.

Members can register for the event here.
Launchpad: *When the Leaves Fall*

Distripress spoke to David Reeve and Luciane Pisani, co-creators and editors of *When The Leaves Fall*, about their new publication.

**How would you describe Where the Leaves Fall in 20 words or less?**

Where the Leaves Fall is a magazine exploring humankind’s connection with nature - through the intersection between social justice and the environment, art, science, culture, philosophy and food.

**What's the story behind the inception of the magazine?**

The title of the magazine came about from observation. We lived next to an ancient woodland and over a decade we got to know that wood fairly well. One thing we noticed is that when Autumn came and the leaves began to fall, on
where they’d become home for numerous biota before decaying and mulching back into the soil, or they’d fall on the pavement – outside the wood. Here they were considered a nuisance – we often saw people slip up on them when it was wet and the local authority has to invest in leaf clearance. Where the Leaves Fall essentially explores humankind’s push-pull relationship with the natural world.

**Who is it aimed at?**
It’s aimed at anyone opening up to change. We’re on a journey with the magazine and we invite everyone to join us.

**What sort of articles can people read in Where the Leaves Fall?**
It’s a magazine that considers local and global experiences and knowledge as a pathway to healing our relationship with nature. We present voices that are often marginalised, such as Indigenous leaders, environmentalists and scientists.

**How would you describe the design?**
The design is contemporary and clean. The focus is on the content and when it comes to text and photography we prefer to work with contributors that collaborate with the communities – that are local to the subject or have built a relationship. The features vary in length but can stretch up to 20 pages. It’s about giving space to an idea or expression.

**What are your ultimate ambitions for the magazine**
Ultimately, we want the magazine to be a seed for change. The magazine is to help recalibrate – to reconnect with traditional knowledge and with nature and embrace a more sustainable way of managing our lives on Earth.

[wheretheleavesfall.com](https://wheretheleavesfall.com)