



# DistriPress

Welcome to the latest edition of the DistriPress newsletter.

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- **Mini case study: Tips for tackling EUDR**
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**DistriPress Congress**  
12-15 OCTOBER 2025 MALTA

**Registration is open now - don't miss out on the early bird discount!**

**REGISTER NOW**

## **First, a farewell**

It has been such a pleasure to work with you all in the DistriPress community during the last 4+ years, and to share good times in Zurich, Estoril, Seville and Budapest. I wish you all a fantastic Congress in Malta this year, as I pass the torch to the brilliant Sarah Lesting, whose passion and dedication will, I'm sure, energise and inspire our community.

I wish you all well.

***Lizanne Barber***



## **Sarah Lesting takes the helm as DistriPress director**



**From April 2025, Sarah Lesting, formerly Managing Director at LEIPA Group, will take on the role of Director at DistriPress. Here, she talks about her passion for publishing and distribution, and how she sees this as an exciting opportunity to expand DistriPress's influence and create even more value for its members.**

Coming from a long tenure at paper and packaging company LEIPA, where she began as a Sales Executive and progressed to Head of Sustainable Solutions, Sarah Lesting was driven by passion to apply for the DistriPress role: "It was definitely a 'heart' decision. I feel really good about being a positive contributing factor for people in the industry."

Despite her love for LEIPA – she jokes, "Everyone says when you cut me open, you see the cyan blue of our logo!" – Sarah couldn't resist the opportunity to work on a broader scale within the industry: "I'm relishing the chance to support not just one company, but a whole host of businesses, all navigating a very difficult market."

### **DistriPress' new chapter**

Sarah is stepping into the role at an exciting time for DistriPress, as it continues to integrate with WAN-IFRA. "Lizanne has been a fantastic director, and she has successfully overseen and completed this important merger. I'm looking forward to taking on this role at what feels like a new beginning for DistriPress as part of WAN-IFRA."

Having been familiar with both organisations through events like the World Printers Forum, Sarah sees her appointment as a natural progression. She recalls that her post-COVID panel appearance at a DistriPress Congress marks a significant moment in her career. "That was one of my first big public speaking events after lockdown. Since then, I've done quite a few speeches and presentations, but now taking that experience into a bigger forum with a wider audience is incredibly exciting."

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**"I'm relishing the chance to support not just one company, but a whole host of businesses, all navigating a very difficult market."**

### **Meaningful events**

As director, Sarah's primary focus will be to continue the strong work of her predecessor while bringing fresh perspectives to the organisation. "Lizanne has done a fantastic job over the last few years, especially navigating the incredibly difficult COVID and post-COVID period. Now, in a post-pandemic world, events have become even more important."

One of Sarah's priorities is ensuring that DistriPress events, particularly its Congress,

provide meaningful experiences for its members. "If people are travelling, the event has to be worth it – it needs to be interactive and engaging," she says.

### **The power of community**

Sarah is a strong advocate for industry networking. "As much as the internet and AI are incredible tools, people-to-people contact is something they will never replace. If we can hold onto that and create events that foster real networking opportunities, we'll always remain relevant."

She believes that AI and automation should serve as facilitators rather than replacements for human connections. "I'm for AI, and I use ChatGPT," she says. "But I'd much rather sit next to a mentor and have them explain it to me. Ideally, AI should free us up to do more of the human work, the connection-building that no algorithm can replicate."

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**"If we can create events that foster real networking opportunities, we'll always remain relevant."**

### **Addressing industry challenges**

Sarah is eager to explore critical topics that affect both publishers and distributors. As a self-described 'green warrior', she highlights sustainability and logistics as major areas of focus for the industry as a whole.

"Print is often seen as the biggest cost, but there's a lot of room to improve efficiencies in distribution too. Sustainability in logistics is a hot topic. In the past, ordering full shipments was easier, whereas nowadays while reduced quantities pose challenges, they also bring opportunities to collaborate with partners to maximise loads. These are the kinds of issues I want to explore."

Collaboration within the diverse community is, she believes, crucial for tackling these challenges. "DistriPress members now have the added value of gaining insight from other sector areas within WAN-IFRA, which already does so much in terms of resources and insights," she says.

## An aspirational future

As Sarah embarks on this new chapter, her enthusiasm is palpable. "This role is an opportunity to take everything I love about this industry – communication, networking, sharing knowledge and insights – and make a real impact, ensuring that DistriPress not only continues its vital work but evolves and adapts to meet what lies ahead."

She is keen to balance this enthusiasm with realism, however. "As much as I'd love to be a dreamer, we need to make those dreams realistic, and set achievable goals. That's my real vision for DistriPress in WAN-IFRA – to shape a future that is not just aspirational, but attainable."

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### MINI CASE STUDY:

#### Tackling the challenges of EUDR



**The EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) deadline extension for smaller companies was met with relief, but there are concerns that businesses will postpone their compliance efforts rather than using this extra time to prepare. Here, we explain the key challenges and steps companies can take to stay ahead.**

The EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) has been a looming challenge for businesses involved in paper, print, and packaging, its requirements for supply chain transparency and due diligence presenting new hurdles, particularly for smaller publishers. For companies across the industry, EUDR compliance is not just about meeting legal requirements – it's about ensuring that supply chains are transparent and verifiable.



## **EUDR: The key challenges**

- **Lack of awareness:** Many publishers were unaware of EUDR's full impact or how to prepare for compliance
- **Complexity of supply chains:** Understanding how different materials and suppliers fit into EUDR's framework is not straightforward
- **Resource limitations:** Smaller publishers lack dedicated compliance teams, making it difficult to track material origins and collect necessary data
- **Unclear guidelines:** Even experts faced uncertainties regarding how EUDR applies in mixed-material scenarios, leading to widespread confusion
- **Financial strain:** Sustainability efforts come with costs, and publishers worry about additional expenses threatening their business viability

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. **Seek expert advice:** Engage with specialists who understand EUDR to clarify compliance requirements
2. **Ask suppliers the right questions:** Enquire about paper sourcing, EUDR readiness, and how compliance codes will be provided
3. **Collaborate with industry peers:** Share knowledge and best practices with other publishers to reduce the burden of individual research
4. **Don't delay:** Use the extended timeline to put compliance processes in place now, rather than waiting until the deadline approaches
5. **Balance sustainability and business viability:** Consider the financial implications of compliance while making environmentally responsible choices
6. **Leverage supply chain transparency:** Use compliance efforts as a marketing advantage, demonstrating commitment to responsible sourcing.

**At our recent DistriPress/WAN-IFRA event, Intergraf's Laetitia Reynaud gave a presentation, 'EUDR Update: March 2025'. Members can view this presentation [here](#).**

**[Not a member? Get in touch to join us](#)**

## MEMBER NEWS: Anthem Publishing doubles share in bookazine market



Anthem Publishing has long been a pioneer in the magazine sector, and its recent growth has consolidated its position as the UK's fastest-growing newsstand publisher. Now, as the company's bookazine market share more than doubles, Managing Director Sally Fitzgerald sheds light on the strategies that have fuelled this expansion

*What has driven Anthem's rapid growth?*

We've always stayed ahead of trends. In 2011, we launched *Cupcake Heaven* at the start of the baking boom, which evolved into our *Food Heaven* series. In 2016, *Colouring Heaven* anticipated the colouring craze, later carving a niche in gothic and fantasy. In 2023, we were among the first UK publishers to launch an air fryer magazine, and last year, we became the first globally to release a *ChatGPT* magazine. At the heart of this innovation is our CEO, Jon Bickley. His willingness to push boundaries earned him *Game Changer of the Year* at the 2024 PPA Independent Publisher Awards. Jon fosters a culture of bold, calculated risk-taking, enabling us to enter markets swiftly and capitalise on opportunities.

*Anthem is now the UK's fastest-growing newsstand publisher. What's behind this success?*

Innovation has been key, but we've grown new products alongside our existing brands, not at their expense. We've invested in passionate experts and expanded where we saw potential.

For example, colouring is a major sector for us. Over the last two years, we've launched two new colouring titles with unique selling points, so now we have five colouring brands within the *Colouring Heaven* family.

**"Innovation has been key, but we've grown new products alongside our existing brands, not at their expense."**

*Your bookazine market share has doubled. What's driving this, and where is the sector heading?*

The bookazine sector is ever changing because it's very trend-led, but there's no denying how important it is. It's bringing new consumers to the sector and breathing new life into the magazine industry. As with most publishers, we had a lot of success with our *Taylor Swift* bookazines, but market saturation pushed us to create something different from the standard bookazines already out there. We became more playful with the boundaries of magazine publishing, creating a *Taylor Dress Up Doll* issue, commissioning a specialist illustrator to illustrate the *Where in the World is Taylor* illustrated magazine, and started producing friendship bracelet kits, temporary tattoos and badges for our Mega Packs. Another major success was our *In Focus* bookazines - A3, high-production-value poster-style magazines. They really stood out as something different, celebrating both the tactile nature of magazines and their collectability. They are made to be treasured for years.

*How do you collaborate with retailers and distributors?*

We work closely with retailers and distributors to ensure they understand our brands' unique selling points. Who better to sell a product than the people who made it? Their market insights help us stay ahead of trends. Our Marketforce team is incredibly passionate about what we do, and we fully support them. DistriPress Congress has become an incredibly important event in our calendar. It gives us a chance to share details of what we've got coming up and also to understand the different global markets, what's working well, and where the pain points are.



*How do direct-to-consumer (DTC) sales and subscriptions fit into your strategy?*

We divide our brands into retail brands (primarily relying on newsstand for revenue) and engagement brands (with more emphasis on direct sales, subscriptions, and advertising). For the engagement brands, subscriptions are incredibly important as they allow us to create communities among our audiences, and then newsstand works alongside this to raise brand awareness and bring new members into the community. We're always refining our direct-to-consumer strategy, but launching a new brand DTC can be challenging without the right data. Platforms like Amazon POD, digital magazine services, and even Etsy help improve discoverability and attract new audiences.

*What's next for Anthem?*

As always, you can expect a lot of innovation. We've already got some new titles planned in the tech sector to capitalise on the success of our *ChatGPT* magazine, and growing our *In Focus* series with new artists and subjects. We've just launched *30 Days To...*, a series designed to help readers build habits over a month. The first issue focused on gut health, with upcoming editions covering sleep, anti-inflammatory diets, and more.

**[Find out more about Anthem](#)**

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