

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Printers Can Expect Little Respite in Fortunes Over Summer**

Results from the BPIF's latest quarterly *Printing Outlook* trading trends survey (March to May) shows little change in printers' fortunes, as trade remains sluggish. Spring proved slightly better than a dire winter period, with the gap narrowing between those experiencing deterioration in trade and those experiencing improvement. Nevertheless, over half of firms responding to the survey report that conditions have actually worsened.

More than two-thirds of printers expect some stability this summer with just 1 in 10 predicting an improvement, and the state of order books reflects the general malaise. The majority of printers have slashed prices further as the market turns more cutthroat in order to attract custom.

Many firms have been forced into cutting staffing levels, a situation that looks set to continue. Most companies have frozen wage levels since the last survey and of those who had changed wage levels, more have decreased than had increased them.

One positive is that cost pressures have generally eased for the majority but even so, margins have again narrowed due to the slump in demand and falling prices. Excess capacity is still a major issue despite lower employment levels and lead times stand at just a matter of weeks for most printers.

BPIF Corporate Affairs Director Andrew Brown said: "These results are our sixth consecutive negative reading from the *Printing Outlook* survey - making the current run of results the worst for a decade. Clearly we can expect there will be little respite in the

period ahead. Although the majority of respondents are expecting trade to stabilise over the summer months, this means that the industry will continue to run at a very low ebb. We can only hope that we have reached the bottom of the trough and that things will pick up later in the year. “

**- ENDS -**

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**Notes to Editors:**

**The British Printing Industries Federation [BPIF]**

The BPIF is the principal business support organisation representing the UK print, printed packaging and graphic communication industry. It is one of the country's leading trade associations. The federation strive to ensure their members' requirements come first. Through listening to their needs they have developed an unrivalled range of products and services that go well beyond those provided by a traditional trade association.

They provide the highest standard of support for printers to grow and develop healthy, sustainable and profitable businesses, aiming to provide an environment geared towards their businesses success. The BPIF offer practical, value-adding solutions for all areas of a print organisation, ranging from Health, Safety, Environmental and Quality issues; with the implementation of HR requirements; provide resolutions of technical or legal issues; as well as advice and support on marketing, sales and finance. This is all delivered by individuals and teams of highly skilled and experienced print industry specialists.

New services recently launched include BPIF Insurance Service and the BPIF Financial Alliance to add to a wide range of business support services including healthcare and pensions. They also offer a wide range of opportunities for networking both regionally and nationally, including prestigious events, special interest groups and popular short courses on a wide range of topics.

For more information on the BPIF, visit: [www.britishprint.com](http://www.britishprint.com).