



THE SINGLE THING I'M MOST EXCITED ABOUT FOR THE FUTURE OF PRINTING

By Anneliese Olson



For the print industry, 2020 was already poised to be significant even before Covid-19 struck. But as systems everywhere have been upended and norms rewritten, the urgent curiosity around how our centuries-old trade will carve out a place for itself in an uncertain future is even greater. Print is a medium that has lasted millennia. Why? Because it has continuously evolved and taken on new meaning, utility and cultural significance with each passing era. Now, print is on the precipice of its next reinvention: the extreme blending of our digital and physical worlds—for the future of work, in re-engineered public spaces, in our evolving personal lives and more. When I think about what that transformation will look like, the opportunity goes deeper than technology. As we architect the new normal for printing, my attention is on one thing—sustainability.

It's unmistakable that there's work to be done, and every government, industry, company and individual has a role to play. But lasting progress isn't a zero-sum game. Long-term sustainability will happen at the crossroads of innovation—in the moments when an individual effort turns into a partnership and when strategic, scalable partnerships begin to form a collaborative ecosystem.

For Individual Companies, Responsibility Equals Opportunity

Companies today are expected to be stewards of the environment. Year after year, profits continue to directly correlate with how well we answer this demand. In fact, [HP's recently launched 2019 Sustainable Impact Report](#), shows that HP saw \$1.6 billion worth of new sales that were influenced by our commitments to sustainability, a 69 percent increase over the previous year.

I believe that creating a corporate infrastructure that is, of course, globally minded, but is also able to support smaller ideas is key to our success. For instance, HP's work to prevent ocean-bound plastics in Haiti and to recycle that material helped lead to one of our key goals today: to reduce HP's single-use plastic packaging by 75 percent by 2025. That mindset also led to HP using 6,960 tonnes of postconsumer recycled plastic content in our printers and 8,949 tonnes in our HP ink and toner cartridges in 2019. Collaborating to start fast and small and then scale more broadly is in our DNA.

When COVID-19 took kids out of schools, we were able to move quickly to create [HP's Print, Play and Learn](#)—a free resource for kids and adults alike to keep learning and creating at home. Similarly, just last year, my team was looking to evolve the HP Sprocket user experience in a mindful way to look more broadly at the photo editing and printing experience. We partnered with HP's Tech Venture team and their local incubator partner in Israel, ran a competition and within just eight weeks had a workable prototype. We did some testing, evolved our plan and, ultimately, achieved a fully integrated solution for our HP Smart App this past November to pilot and take global.

When we maintain the ability to think like a start-up within a legacy brand, change doesn't have to come at great expense to time or resources. Third-party partnerships, which extend the agility and impact of sustainable thinking even more, are a continuation of that mindset.

As Necessity Mounts, Partnerships Are Vital to Lasting Impact

Sustainability won't be achieved by any company evolving in a silo. Goals to improve resource consumption or advance production practices can't be limited to just an organization's own operations. Those efforts are necessary but, ultimately, not enough. Going deeper with partners in order to be part of something bigger and longer-term is where sustainability and strategy really mesh. For HP, this takes shape in countless ways. One of the partnerships I'm most proud of is one we forged with World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

Not long ago, we announced a 5-year [plan to help restore and conserve 200,000 acres](#) of forest (roughly the size of New York City). As we shared in our latest Sustainable Impact Report, we've been able to expand that partnership in the past year and maintained a zero deforestation benchmark with HP brand paper. It's been a goal—and an imperative—of our company to empower sustainability through technology for decades, and this is one of the ways we were able to do much more with the help of an equally committed partner than we ever could have alone. I'm also encouraged to see support growing for the [World Economic Forum's initiative to restore a trillion trees](#) by 2050. Collectively, all of our efforts will create an influential ecosystem effect.

With a Collaborative Ecosystem, Potential Becomes Profound Progress

HP's commitment to sustainable impact is grounded in three things: the planet, of course, but also in people and community. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals are one of the best examples of an ecosystem mentality at work—in other words, that when we align, we get more done. In fact, we're about six months into what the UN dubbed the "[Decade of Action](#)" because of how much work is yet to be done to stabilize our planet by 2030—a challenge that COVID-19 only accelerated.

As momentum and collaboration grows, most companies have to find a balance between today's habits and tomorrow's needs. Print is a great example. HP's research has shown that, even with a shift to digital processes and mobile screens, a large majority of people in developed countries print often—at least once every 30 days—and that most of them also say they can't live without paper. The fact that people love and rely on print in their everyday lives creates a unique opportunity for everyone—not just for us as a leader in our industry. HP, like every company, has a role to play in the communities we operate in and a responsibility to find sustainable solutions to answer consumer demand now and for the future. The forest conservation work is just one example.

Thinking about the progress made and also the work yet to be done, I often recall when I was younger and my mother taught me a really important lesson. She said, "To whom much is given, much is expected." I see the world through this lens. Any individual entity has the power to recognize their influence and set in motion great change. And nowhere is this more relevant today than in regard to sustainability. I'm proud of what HP has achieved so far, but I'm even more heartened by the very ambitious environmental goals that we've set for ourselves—goals that I know we'll achieve with the help of dedicated partners and a strong ecosystem mindset. As we head into another landmark year of innovation, I'm excited to see—and be part of—the many ways the dynamic medium of print will change the world next.