

ACTIVITY REPORT 2015-2016



ETIRA

European Toner & Inkjet Remanufacturers' Association aisbl/ivzw

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ETIRA is the trade association for the European cartridge remanufacturing industry. ETIRA speaks on behalf of the thousands of large and small companies across Europe that provide an equal quality, yet more environment-friendly and cost-effective alternative to the regular OEM product. Visit www.etira.org for more information.



From the President

It is my pleasure to again present to you an ETIRA "multi-annual" annual report.

As I write this introduction, the world is slowly emerging from the longest economic crisis since WW II. The signs of recovery of the general economy are definitively there. Just to name a few selected and unconnected examples: government borrowing rates in Spain and Italy are coming down fast, German unemployment is at a record low, most European economies are showing growth again, etc. etc.

The ECB's policy of quantitative easing "European style" may be successful in the monetary environment, but in our industry the signs are not so clear yet. We continue to suffer from a general problem slowing down our growth: less prints. Since 2007/2008, consumers and businesses print off much less than they used to, and this development affects OEM's, remanufacturers and newbuilts alike. In addition, the remanufactured cartridge market faces stiff competition from clones and from the OEM's, and heavy price pressure across many product types. We expect that these challenging conditions will remain with us for a few more years.

As a logical consequence, the past 2 years saw more concentration across our industry than ever before. Several major industry players joined hands to reduce production costs and improve their position in the marketplace. These new international partnerships will provide them with a more pan-European, or even global reach. My own firm is an example of this trend, and more recently a major supplies provider announced a merger with a large Chinese chip supplier. ETIRA expects this global concentration trend to further accelerate in the next years. By working together, both remanufacturers as well as suppliers of components can face the growing competition with the OEM's.

These developments are also reflected within ETIRA: as a body representing an industry going through a structural change process, ETIRA changes with it. In the future, our membership may include fewer but bigger firms.

The industry trade shows may also experience this change, as some traditional exhibitors may step back while new ones take their place on the show floor.

In Europe, ETIRA has been actively engaged in the growing strive for sustainability. Particularly in Western Europe, corporate social responsibility is back on everybody's agenda. Public bodies and private firms are increasingly looking for ways to reduce their overall environmental footprint, and an easy and effective way to do that is to green your printing. In that context, using remanufactured cartridges is your best choice. The EU recognized this fact in 2013/2014, please refer to the information on ecodesign, green public procurement and Ecolabel in the "Environment"-section in this Annual Report. And there is more to come: with the possible inclusion of cartridges in the WEEE-2 legislation, collection of empties will become an even higher priority in most EU Member States.

Having acted as the associations' President since 2006 was, and still is, a great honour for me. Together with our Board of Directors and the Secretariat, I am proud to be serving this industry.

I thank you for your interest in cartridge remanufacturing, and in ETIRA. Talk to us anytime you want: just contact our Secretariat on info@etira.org.

Feldkirchen, Austria, June 2015
Christian Wernhart (Embatex), President of ETIRA

General market developments

In 2014/2015, market conditions remained very challenging for non-OEM cartridge remanufacturers. Like in 2012/2013, price pressure continues to be the name of the game across European markets.

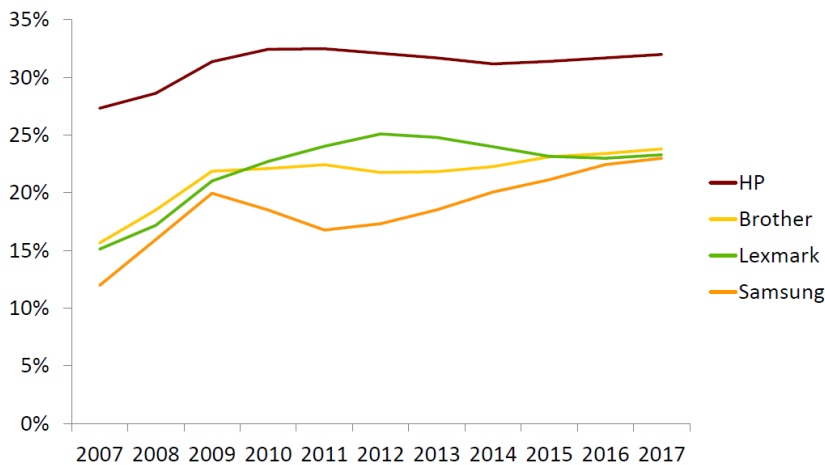
Still, more recently, the number of printer shipments saw some growth. According to research by International Data Corporation (IDC), the Q1 2015 Western European printer and multifunction (MFP) market grew to 5,49 million units, up 2,6% compared with the same period in 2014, with positive growth for both inkjet and laser. Revenues also increased. This positive first quarter follows an overall recovery in the hardcopy market in Western Europe in 2014.

Most market researchers stress that printed volumes in the home and office will continue to decline. This development affects OEM's and remanufacturers alike.

The European cartridge aftermarket

Market intelligence firm IDC estimated that the EMEA market for third-party toner cartridges in 2012 was worth around \$3 billion, excluding counterfeits. The toner B/W aftermarket (=remanufactured OEM and non-OEM newbuilts) share in Western Europe has remained relatively stable since 2012/2013: it is around 22-28 % for some OEM brands, and has grown from 15%-20% to 22% for others. In color toner, the non-OEM share is estimated to grow from 7%-10% to 12%-15% (source: InfoTrends).

Western Europe B/W Laser Cartridge Aftermarket Share of Units

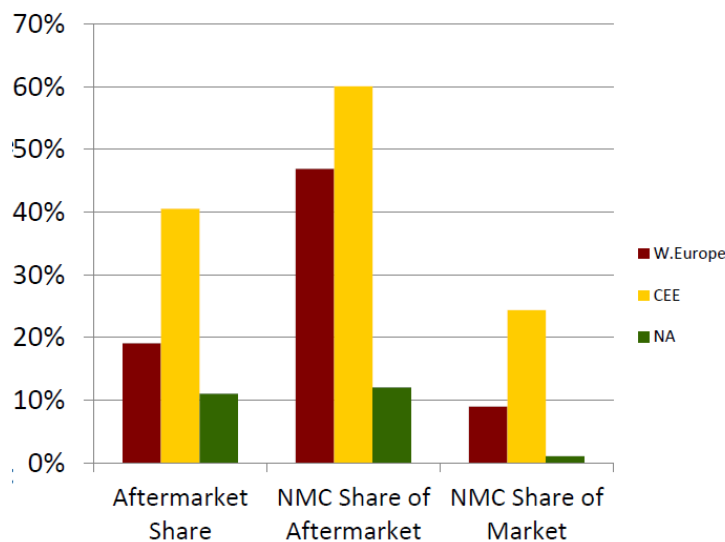


Source: InfoTrends

In inkjet, the aftermarket share ranges between 12% and 20%, depending on the OEM brand.

Non-OEM newbuilts

The aftermarket has a share of approx. 25 % of the total West-European market in toner B/W cartridges. About 1/3 of that volume is newbuilt toners. For inkjets, market intelligence firm InfoTrends last year estimated the r NMC's ("Newly Made Compatibles") market shares as below:



NMC inkjet market presence, source: InfoTrends, 2014

Nonetheless, ETIRA estimates that since 2013 the trade in newbuilt clones shows signs of stabilisation: the imported volumes which saw constant growth every year since 2008/2009, tended to flatten out in the course of the last 12-18 months. Overall, in the "major accounts" market segment, clones are less present than they used to be. Following the increasing number of legal actions undertaken by the OEM's against patent infringements, we notice that large customers tend to stay away from non-OEM newbuilts to avoid the risk of a patent lawsuit. Still, clone prices continued their multi-annual downward trend, which negatively affects the remanufactured OEM cartridge industry.

As patent-infringing newbuilts are now under increased legal pressure from the OEM's, large suppliers of newbuilts in SE Asia will step up their efforts to comply with intellectual property rights in Europe and the USA. These firms will invest more in research and development to find ways around patents on cartridges. Thus, ETIRA expects that newbuilts will remain present on European markets in the long run, as a addition to the dominant OEM market share and the existing substantial market share held by remanufactured OEM products.

LEGAL ISSUES

Legal issues, including patents and fair competition rules, are permanently on ETIRA's radar screen.

OEM's apply a wide variety of tools to hinder the growth of our industry. Examples of the tools they use include:

- fitting the cartridge with all kinds of software/clever chips: the printer does not recognize the non-OEM cartridge and will not print, or it gives confusing messages to the end-user
- design: the cartridge is designed to make remanufacturing impossible (example: use of glue instead of screws to fit cartridge-parts together) or unnecessarily difficult
- warranties: a few OEM's still threaten end-users that the printer warranty is void when non-original cartridges are used. However, such an obligation to only use OEM-cartridges violates EU fair competition laws, and will not stand up in court
- OEM's closed-shop collection schemes for empties, denying remanufacturers access to their base material: empties
- exclusion of non-OEM products from public or private tenders, even though a;; market players must be treated equally
- patents on remanufacturing the cartridge, even wehn the OEM does not remanufacture its own cartridges

Where and when required, ETIRA fights these tools to ensure a level playing field in competition with OEM's.

OEM patents on remanufacturing

Patents on remanufacturing are a permanent problem for our industry. Some OEMs apply for patents which merely seek to render the legitimate activity of remanufacturing OEM cartridges impossible, even when they do not remanufacture cartridges themselves. Thus, they pro-actively prevent the environment-friendly reuse of their product, only for commercial reasons.

Moreover: the European Patent Office EPO grants patents far too easily, i.e. even for ideas which were fully obvious to a person skilled in the art, or without a proper analysis of the existing prior art, etc.

Canon patent lawsuits against newbuilts and remanufactured cartridges

In 2014, Canon sued many European aftermarket companies, charging them with infringement of toner cartridge patent 2 087 407. Defendants in the case were mainly manufacturers of non-OEM newbuilt toner cartridges. But at a later stage, Canon expanded its legal actions, and also sued a few remanufacturers who simply reuse the original cartridge.

As a rule, ETIRA supports the right of OEM's to protect their intellectual property rights against fully newbuilt, one-on-one copy cartridges, dumped on the European market without any consideration for patents held by the printer manufacturer. But repairing the empty original OEM cartridge after its 1st use, and then reusing it as a cartridge, is not a patent infringement anywhere in the world. Rather, it is a perfectly legal and environment-friendly, lower cost alternative choice for the European consumer. Remanufacturing original cartridges has been done for more than 30 years, so it's a well-established practice. Even some printer manufacturers remanufacture cartridges !

That is why in December 2014, ETIRA reached out to Canon and asked them to respect the universal legal right to remanufacture an original cartridge. If they are truly dedicated to sustainability as they publicly claim they are, they should welcome cartridge remanufacturing instead of preventing it.

ETIRA opposition at EPO against HP inkjet patent 0940 259/258 on memory device

In 2006, ETIRA filed official Opposition with the European Patent Office (EPO) against HP patent 0940 258 B. This patent concerns the refurbishment of an inkjet container, and was applied for by HP already back in 1999. Following our opposition, an interim hearing was held at the European Patent Office EPO in 2011, where we again argued our case. Unfortunately the Examiners did not agree with our arguments, and the patent was upheld. ETIRA then continued with a full appeal opposition procedure at the EPO. In late 2014, the EPO Board of Appeal issued its provisional viewpoint, which was very different from the 2011 viewpoint: they now considered the patent as being "not innovative", as most claims concern matters that a person skilled in the art would have thought of himself too.

In 2015, this case will see a hopefully positive conclusion.

ETIRA opposition at EPO against Canon patent EP 153 6207 on shaft

In July 2014, ETIRA assessed Canon shaft patent EP 153 6207. Applied for in 2004, it was awarded in early 2014 and has no less than 180 (!) claims. Like many similar patents, EP 153 6207 seeks to monopolize basic techniques that have been used by many remanufacturers for years. Following an in-depth assessment by ETIRA, we decided in early October 2014 to file an official Opposition at the EPO against this Canon patent. It is expected that a Hearing of the parties involved may occur in 2016.

Patent infringing newbuilt cartridges from SE Asia

Since 2008/2009, the EU market has seen an invasion of cheap newbuilt non-OEM cartridges imported from SE Asia. Very often these products infringe OEM patents. Moreover, they are bad for the environment as they are neither collected nor remanufactured. Unfortunately, traders who do not care about patents, quality, or the environment, sell these products to ignorant European customers every day.

ETIRA opposes the trade in such patent-infringing newbuilt cartridges because it is an offense, and resellers and distributors should not buy these products if they want to stay out of court and avoid bankruptcy. And it's also anti-environmental and anti-social behaviour: these Asian cartridges typically pollute the European environment as they are neither remanufactured (that would be just as illegal as manufacturing them) nor recycled. They are simply thrown away after 1st use, resulting in unnecessary extra landfill in Europe. European individuals or companies caring about sustainability should only buy remanufactured OEM cartridges.

Legal actions against patent-infringing newbuilts

In the past 4 years, OEM's have acted aggressively against newbuilt cartridges which infringe their patents. Across Europe, dozens of importers, traders and distributors were sued for damages. In most cases, the OEM prevailed and the defendants were forced to stop trading the infringing products and pay damages to the OEM. The general public can help OEM's identify companies selling patent-infringing newbuilts, by reporting these firms via the respective OEM e-mail dropboxes.

ETIRA welcomes OEM legal action where it concerns pure newbuilts.

Also ETIRA has been active by addressing the lack of awareness among distributors and resellers regarding the various kinds of cartridges in the marketplace. Many customers are unable to distinguish between remanufactured OEM and newbuilt non-OEM cartridges. That is why in 2012 we produced the "ETIRA Guide to Clones". Freely downloadable from the ETIRA website in 10 languages, this Guide defines "clones" and is a useful tool for ETIRA Members and their clients in our ongoing fight against the flood of cheap newbuilt patent-infringing non-OEM cartridges from SE Asia.

In 2015, we publicized an updated version of the Guide to Clones.

Public tenders excluding remanufactured cartridges under the tender

Objecting against public tenders excluding remanufactured cartridges from participating in the tender is a quasi-permanent task for ETIRA. Some public bodies, deliberately or not, ask only for OEM products and exclude remanufactured OEM cartridges. The kind of exclusion may take many different forms: ranging from a simple direct exclusion (*"only OEM products can be offered"*) through an indirect exclusion (*demanding that "the original manufacturer certifies the non-OEM product"*) to outright nonsense argumentation (*"only OEM because warranty on the printer is void if non-OEM is used"*).

It is unfortunate that we continue to see public bodies still not fully complying with EU law on free competition, and illegally excluding remanufactured a fair and equal opportunity to tender.

But as this is a matter of principle for our industry, we continue to protest everywhere we find these illegal exclusions. For use by its Members, ETIRA has available a model letter outlining the legal arguments why public tenders cannot exclude remanufactured.

In 2014/2015, ETIRA protested against exclusion in tenders in Spain, Germany, Austria, etc. In several cases where ETIRA intervened, the tendering public body changed their tender criteria because of our protest.

Warranties

Several times a year ETIRA has to deal with complaints about printer manufacturers or maintenance firms which refuse to honour the printer warranty simply because non-OEM cartridges were used in the printer. But in accordance with EU and national law, a manufacturing company cannot argue that the printer warranty is null and void just because non-OEM cartridges were used: for the warranty to be justifiably refused, there must be clear and undisputed proof that the malfunction of the printer was directly caused by the non-OEM cartridge. If this proof cannot be provided, the warranty must be honoured in full.

Luckily, today almost all OEM's have published clear statements (even on the internet !) that the printer warranty is not void simply because non-OEM cartridges are used. Also the EPEAT public procurement scheme and similar public procurement schemes clearly require OEM's to provide these assurances.

In 2014/2015, ETIRA intervened in cases against 2 OEM's and against a company supplying printers which told its customers that the warranty was void if non-OEM cartridges were used.

PROMOTING QUALITY REMANUFACTURING

Product quality is the #1 priority of ETIRA: only if our product is as good as, or better than, the OEM-equivalent, are we able to grow our market share. This is why most of our efforts focus on enhancing quality across the industry. ETIRA Members do not compromise when it comes to quality: only the best will do. ETIRA welcomes pan-European and global standards that set clear parameters, and are widely recognized. ETIRA contributes, directly or indirectly, in the development of the following standards:

ISO cartridge standards

To measure cartridge yield, ISO has developed standards 24711 (ink), 19752 (toner B/W) and 19798 (color toner). ISO product standard 29142 for cartridges applies to OEM, compatible and remanufactured cartridges alike, and covers labelling and environmental performance criteria.

The entities participating in the ISO work are predominantly the major international OEM's. Some manufacturers of newbuilt compatibles, and a few remanufacturers also contribute to the work of this ISO Working Group. Being a trade association, ETIRA does not directly participate in ISO.

DIN standards for remanufactured cartridges

DIN standards for cartridges 33870-1, 33870-2 and 33871-1 apply only to remanufactured cartridges. DIN have recently reviewed its existing standards and introduced auditing provisions. The standards can be obtained from DIN.

ISO standard 8887 on remanufacturing/design for reuse

In 2016, ISO will finalize work on standard 8887 "Design for manufacture, assembly, disassembly and end-of-life processing (MADE)". Although this is a general standard on generic remanufacturing, it will also affect products like cartridges. ETIRA expects that in the future, this standard may obtain an important role across the industry.

In 2015, the ETIRA Board of Directors will again assess the need for developing our own remanufactured cartridge standard.

ENVIRONMENT

Remanufacturing empty cartridges is good for the environment. This is why ETIRA insists that European public policy should promote remanufacturing, and support our industry in its call for a level playing field. Unfortunately, this is not always the case.

The EU has defined a clear hierarchy in the environmental impact of waste: prevention of waste has the lowest impact, and re-use (=remanufacturing) follows immediately after that, so before recycling. With re-use prevailing over recycling, re-use should always be the preferred option.

EU eco-design policy

Since 2005, ETIRA has constantly lobbied worldwide for the introduction of eco-design rules that support reuse of cartridges, and prohibit OEM's anti-remanufacturing practices and devices such as clever chips. After all, the largest environmental impact from printing comes from the many cartridges used in the printer during its lifetime, not from the printer as such. Reuse of cartridges can reduce CO2 emissions by 40%-60%.

In the larger framework of promoting eco-friendly printing in both the EU and in the USA, regulators are working to set rules for imaging equipment. In that context, ETIRA has reached out to authorities and participated in seminars, meetings, working groups, etc. We successfully lobbied for favourable wording in the EU ecodesign criteria for imaging equipment, the EU Ecolabel for imaging equipment, the EU criteria for green public procurement (GPP), the US public procurement scheme EPEAT, and lastly the Nordic Ecolabel (=formerly "Nordic Swan"). In 2015/2016, we will lobby the EU Commission regarding their new Circular Economy initiative

EU Voluntary Agreement Imaging Equipment

The EU Directive on eco-design aims to reduce energy-use of products by obliging manufacturers to design products in such a way that they have the lowest environmental impact. Under a policy of self-regulation, compliance could be achieved by industry setting up its own voluntary rules, under so-called industry-wide "Voluntary Agreements (VA's)", instead of by using compulsory EU laws.

One of these VA's concerns Imaging Equipment. After years of fighting, ETIRA succeeded in getting positive wording on cartridges also included in that VA: it's article 5 now says cartridges may not be designed to prevent their reuse and recycling, and printers must accept non-OEM cartridges. Unfortunately, the OEM's also added an "escape clause", which says that *this article shall not be interpreted in such a way that would prevent or limit innovation, development or improvements in design or functionality of the products, cartridges, etc.*

Since 2011, we have lobbied the Commission and NGO's and Member States for the removal of this escape clause. According to ETIRA, this extra sentence renders the noble objectives completely useless: after all, OEM's will always argue that each of their new anti-remanufacturing devices were "necessary to innovate, or improve design, functionality" etc. And as most OEM's do not endorse the remanufacturing of their cartridges, the result is that this article will have no practical value whatsoever, and cartridge re-use will not be promoted. The EU environment will be the victim. We also argued that other EU Commission policy initiatives (*Ecolabel-criteria, GPP criteria, WEEE*) fully and proactively support the remanufacturing of cartridges. This VA should therefore not counter those initiatives.

During 2013/2014, ETIRA discussed with the OEM's (EuroVApriint) to try and agree an alternative wording. The talks have proven unsuccessful due to OEM intransigency. As a result, the most recent (2015) version of the Voluntary Agreement (VA) Imaging Equipment still contains the escape clause. That is why ETIRA no longer considers a compromise solution possible, and has asked the EU Commission to introduce mandatory legislation to replace the toothless Voluntary Agreement.

VA's must be frequently re-assessed, and such an assessment is currently ongoing to see whether imaging equipment will be included in the 2015-2017 EU Commission work programme. The latest version of the EU's draft assessment report follows the ETIRA viewpoint on cartridges: it also calls for the escape clause to be scrapped. The report also questions anti-remanufacturing devices, and supports standardisation for remanufactured cartridges.

EU Ecolabel and Green Public Procurement: public bodies to support remanufactured cartridges

EU Ecolabels allow consumers to identify the products which have the best environmental performance. The label also serves as tool for public authorities that want to buy green products, because the Ecolabel is part of the EU's recommended Green Public Procurement criteria (GPP) which public bodies can use when buying office equipment (*see all EU languages here: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/eu_gpp_criteria_en.htm*).

In December 2013, the EU Commission published criteria for the new EU Ecolabel for imaging equipment in all EU languages (*Commission Decision 2013/806/EU published in OJ L 353 of 28 Dec 2013, see here for all languages: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013D0806>*).

Following 3 years of intense lobbying by ETIRA, this criteria set also includes criteria for cartridges. Thanks to our outreach, this Ecolabel is only available to printers that accept remanufactured cartridges and were designed while taking reuse of cartridges into consideration. Moreover, the Ecolabel criteria stipulate that anti-reutilisation devices/practises may not be present or applied. And to avoid all misunderstandings, OEM's must include the following message in the instruction manual of any Eco-label approved printer:

" The cartridges of this equipment are designed for reuse. It is recommended to reuse the cartridge as this is saving resource.'

Moreover, OEM's selling Ecolabel-certified printers must offer users a take-back system for the return of toner and/or ink modules and containers supplied or recommended by the OEM for use in the product, in order to channel them to reuse and/or material recycling, with preference given to reuse. Third parties (i.e. remanufacturers and brokers) may be subcontracted to perform this task and they shall be provided with instructions for proper handling of residual toner. Non-recyclable product parts shall be properly disposed.

When tendering for supplies, public authorities often simply choose the cheapest product offered, which in many cases is a patent-infringing newbuilt cartridge. So doing, they neglect the environmental burden and loss of local jobs that these products bring about. The new GPP and Ecolabel criteria will allow remanufacturers, being only small and medium-sized enterprises, to capitalize on their added value: the environment-friendly reuse of a product, produced by local workers, thus saving natural resources and creating local jobs. ETIRA expects the Ecolabel to become a key element in public tender criteria, driving demand for remanufactured cartridges. We are happy that the EU has finally recognized the great contribution that reuse of cartridge makes to lowering the environmental footprint of printing overall.

EU electronic waste policy (WEEE)

Launched in 2004, the WEEE is the EU's legal instrument to address the growing electronic and electrical waste pile. In 2014, an updated version ("WEEE-2") was approved. In April 2014, the EU Commission published a new FAQ document on the WEEE-2. In this FAQ, the Commission says that all cartridges that need electronic current are covered under the WEEE.

Even though a FAQ is not a legal document, it is likely that many Member States will follow this Commission recommendation. For cartridge remanufacturers, coverage may bring about a number of changes to our business model. Inclusion implies cartridges must carry the wheeled dustbin logo, and have a sound "end-of-life" solution, such as being covered under a collection programme.

Much will depend on the way how this new rule will be implemented at national level: ETIRA expects Member States to deal with this matter very differently. ETIRA assists its Members across Europe in this matter. In this context, it is relevant to note that in December 2013 Chris Davies MEP filed an EU Parliament question on the possible implications of WEEE inclusion. The EU's Environment Commissioner replied him in February 2014 that regarding "*the continued viability of the remanufacturing sector, the end-user would in any case have the option to re-use the used cartridges instead of taking them to the WEEE collection points. Moreover, the WEEE Directive requires Member States to encourage the design and production of electrical and electronic equipment with a view to facilitate their re-use.*"

EU Circular Economy policy initiative

Late 2014, the new EU Commission scrapped the previous EU Commission's proposals for a circular economy policy. New Commissioner Frans Timmermans justified the cancellation by promising a better and even more environment-friendly alternative proposal in late 2015.

In that context, ETIRA calls on the EU Commission to promote reuse. Reuse should receive a higher priority than it has today, as existing eco-friendly policies often fail to deliver a tangible increase in reuse. ETIRA insists that for a real circular economy to materialize, clear targets for reuse should be set and Member States must be forced to meet them. Legislative tools should include strict regulatory, not voluntary, action on eco-design (no clever chips !) and the removal of legal barriers which frustrate remanufacturing (patents and other IP-rights). And we need the government to lead by example: e.g. public tenders should reserve a minimum percentage of the tendered volume for remanufactured products. ETIRA will provide input into the EU stakeholder consultation process on the circular economy which is currently ongoing.



The Future: tomorrow's Ecolabeled printers must accept remanufactured cartridges

NETWORKING

Organising events on a regular basis is a key activity of ETIRA: meeting current and new partners, in both informal and formal settings, helps to create new business and raise the overall industry market share.

ETIRA/The Recycle FOE Focus On Europe industry conference in Barcelona, June 2014

On 5/6 June 2014, ETIRA met in Barcelona for its annual meeting and for instructive seminars at the FOE Focus On Europe industry conference. The event was a top opportunity for networking and learning. Held at the Salle Pere IV hotel, the FOE Conference is the largest industry event in Europe after the remanexpo@paperworld trade show in Frankfurt.



Learning about latest industry developments, networking, and "farewell and thank you !" to OCP's Mr Horst Edelmeier

On Thursday, there was a Board meeting and annual statutory meeting. The latter elected Mrssrs. Pierre-Antoine Pluinage, (Armor) Joachim Kretschmer (Pelikan Hardcopy), Javier Martinez (Consuprint) and Carsten Edelmeier (OCP) as new Board Members for the 2014-2016 mandate. President Christian Wernhart (Embatex), Vice-President David Connett (The Recycler), Treasurer Philippe Guenin (LVL) and Members Jan-Michael Sieg (KMP PrintTechnik) and Tamas Kadar (KIT) were reappointed.

The ETIRA Member's Only session was followed by the FOE Conference. This public event kicked off with a series of presentations by industry experts on many market-related topics. The Cocktail and Dinner were for networking, and saw ETIRA say farewell and "thank you" to outgoing Board Members Horst Edelmeier (OCP), who is retiring, and Flavio Monti (Pelican Hardcopy). Horst Edelmeier has been Member of the Board since 2006, and a strong supporter of ETIRA throughout. As Board Member he has provided input on "all issues ink", and his company OCP was a frequent sponsor of the many industry events

On Friday, several seminars moderated by The Recycler's David Connett, brought a full range of top industry Speakers who educated the audience on the latest industry news. On market intelligence there was a lot to learn: InfoTrends' Andrew Carroll showed the latest statistics on business inkjet and the presence of clones across W-Europe. From Static Control, Ken Lalley addressed the floor on the fight against clones. Many more interesting presentations were given.

ETIRA thanks organizers The Recycler magazine, and sponsors OCP, CBC, Static Control and Triton for a very successful 2-day event in Barcelona !!

ETIRA speaks at October 2014 Recycling Times industry conference in Zhuhai, China

Upon invitation of the organisers, ETIRA was among the speakers at the October 2014 industry conference RT Imaging Summit in Zhuhai, China. This 1-day event precedes the large printing consumables' expo trade show in the cartridge capital of the world, held 16-18 October, also in Zhuhai.

The Summit was attended by approx. 200 delegates, mainly from China, and it's speakers included legal experts, industry rep's, and market intelligence experts. The main topic of discussion was OEM patents: many Chinese export firms are increasingly on the OEM legal radar screen for selling patent-infringing newbuilt cartridges across the world. At the meeting, ETIRA's Vincent van Dijk briefed delegates about the risks of selling patent-infringing newbuilts into European markets: sooner or later, OEM's will sue the infringers. We also insisted that low priced, patent-infringing knock-off products depress the market, and ruin the overall image of our industry.

The meeting called for more global cooperation in the fight against infringing newbuilts. In Zhuhai, Vincent also met ETIRA members and prospect members.

ETIRA attends UKCRA meetings in Coventry

In November 2014 and April 2015, ETIRA's Vincent van Dijk attended the meetings of UK national cartridge remanufacturers' association UKCRA in Coventry. Both sessions addressed several topics affecting the European and UK cartridge remanufacturing industry. Industry expert Dr Michael Gell discussed WEEE issues, and UK government officials presented details of how the UK will go about the inclusion of cartridges under the WEEE-2 ("WEEE-recast") directive in the UK. ETIRA briefed UKCRA delegates about latest industry developments.

Patent-infringing newbuilts: ETIRA speaks at many Static Control Components' industry seminars across Europe

Since early 2014, ETIRA participated in a series of industry seminars across Europe organised by Static Control Components. These seminars are useful information sessions for learning about the latest Static Control products and techniques, but also about industry developments.

ETIRA attended these seminars to raise awareness among a relevant audience about the dangers involved when trading patent-infringing newbuilts. We also showcase ETIRA, the single European representative body for the cartridge remanufacturing industry. Where possible, the sessions serve to sign up new members.

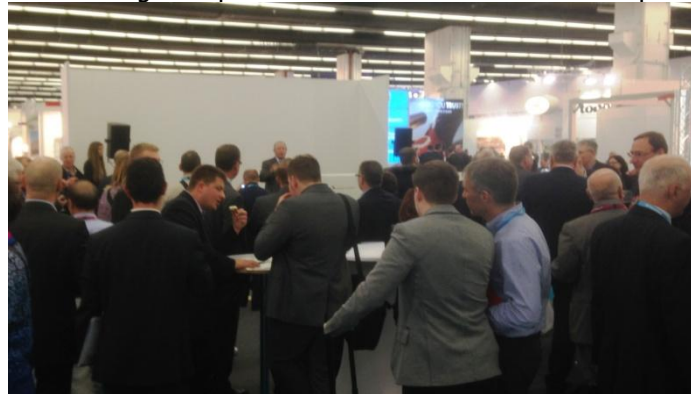
Since early 2014, ETIRA's Vincent van Dijk travelled to Athens, Paris, Bucarest, Salerno, Riga, Zagreb and Budapest to address the local remanufacturers and other industry members..

ETIRA Board of Directors met in Düsseldorf to discuss 2015 strategy

In October 2014, the ETIRA Board of Directors and two invited observers met for a full day in Düsseldorf. The group addressed many topics affecting the European cartridge remanufacturing industry. Participants gave a briefing on developments in their local markets. We discussed the continuous impact clones have on prices of remanufactured cartridges, and Canon 's legal actions regarding alleged patent infringements. The Board also discussed the 2015 work programme.

ETIRA booth and Cocktail at remanexpo@paperworld 2015

Like very year, ETIRA again exhibited throughout the 4 days at the 2015 remanexpo trade show at Paperworld. This largest European show for office supplies was held 31 January - 3 February at Frankfurter Messe in Frankfurt, Germany. We met with Members and prospects and distributed flyers urging visitors to buy remanufactured cartridges and related services from ETIRA Members only. We also handed out ETIRA's 2015 "Guide to Clones". On Sunday, ETIRA hosted its traditional "ETIRA Cocktail at remanexpo@paperworld". Over 100 industry delegates (remanufacturers', suppliers of components, ink/toner producers, empty collectors, and even several OEM's !) enjoyed the opportunity to network and exchange business cards.....This year, the drink was combined with the ceremony of The Recycler industry awards. ETIRA also signed up several new Members at remanexpo.



Networking and newbizz leads at ETIRA booth and at the ETIRA Cocktail, January 2015, at remanexpo.in Frankfurt

At the show, many Asian companies offering non-OEM cartridges were raided by German customs services. A special squad of 12-15 German customs officials walked the trade show floor on Saturday, on the look-out for patent-infringing printer cartridges.

As a principle, ETIRA endorses these raids because printer manufacturers are entitled to protect their legitimate intellectual property rights. Selling patent-infringing newbuilt cartridges is a criminal offense, and resellers and distributors should not buy these products if they want to stay out of court. And it's also anti-social behaviour: these Asian cartridges typically pollute the European environment as they are not remanufactured (that would be just as illegal as building them) nor recycled. So they are simply thrown away after 1st use, resulting in unnecessary extra landfill in Europe. Any European company caring about sustainability and its overall image, should only buy remanufactured OEM cartridges.

Various

In 2014/2015, ETIRA-manager Vincent van Dijk visited many ETIRA member firms and prospect-members across Europe, to discuss current topics and highlight the benefits of ETIRA membership.

Newsletters and articles

Frequent Newsflashes were sent to members to inform them about industry developments and ETIRA activities.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

ETIRA's role includes raising awareness about the industry among the general public. We stress that remanufacturing used OEM cartridges is a high-tech, innovative and dynamic activity, good for both the customer and for the environment.

ETIRA booth at annual Paperworld international trade show

To help ETIRA Members grow their business, ETIRA exhibits every year at the annual remanexpo@paperworld trade show held in January/February in Frankfurt. We use the booth to showcase our industry, and inform many resellers and distributors from all over Europe about remanufactured cartridges, and the added benefits of trading with an ETIRA Member.

We distribute leaflets and info in different languages. We answer enquiries about ETIRA and the Code of Conduct logo, outline the advantages of buying from an ETIRA member, and inform visitors why ETIRA Members provide value for money.

Website

ETIRA operates a website (www.etira.org) for the general public to learn about the benefits of inkjet and toner remanufacturing, and to enhance the general industry image. The website also lists all ETIRA members, allowing clients to find suppliers instantly.

Articles

The Secretariat regularly writes in industry magazine The Recycler, and frequently contributes to other publications. Information is also posted regularly on our website: www.etira.org.

ETIRA Code of Conduct and "Ticked-R" collective mark

The ETIRA Code of Conduct is a code of good business practice. Its obligations include social and environmental responsibility, promotion of top-quality and innovative products, clear warranties, compliance with laws and regulations at national and international level, and ensuring consumer and worker safety and health. The Code also includes a clear obligation to refrain from trading patent-infringing newbuilts as defined in ETIRA's "Guide to Clones". All ETIRA members must comply with the Code, allowing them to use the association's green/yellow "Ticked-R"-logo, distinguishing them in the marketplace.

The ETIRA Code of Conduct is available for download from the ETIRA website.

ETIRA BODIES

ETIRA is the acronym of the European Toner & Inkjet Remanufacturers' Association aisbl/ivzw. A non-profit organisation in accordance with Belgian law, its statutory seat is Brussels, Belgium, with a Secretary General's office in Breda, The Netherlands.

ETIRA represents the interests of the European inkjet and toner cartridge remanufacturers and related service providers/compatibles manufacturers, etc. in Europe. Created in 2003 by 17 founding companies, the current 50 ETIRA members now account for over 60% of industry turnover. A full up-to-date list of ETIRA Members and their contact details can be found on our website: www.etira.org

Today, ETIRA is the recognized industry body for all topics affecting cartridge remanufacturing, and registered in the EU Transparency Register.

General Assembly

The General Assembly is comprised of all ETIRA full Members and meets at least 1x per year. It sets the general guidelines of the Association, elects the Board of Directors, approves the annual accounts and budgets, etc.

Board of Directors

ETIRA's Board of Directors is elected by the General Assembly every other year, and composed of respected company representatives from the various sections of the cartridge remanufacturing industry across Europe. Meeting approx. 2-3 times per year, Board Members are not remunerated and carry their own travel expenses. The Board of Directors implements the General Assembly's guidelines, sets an annual work program, approves membership applications, prepares annual accounts and budgets, etc.

The ETIRA Board of Directors is currently (June 2015) composed of the following persons (mandate 2014-2016):

President	Christian Wernhart	Embatex	A
Vice-President	David Connett	The Recycler Magazine	UK
Treasurer	Philippe Guenin	LVL	F
Member	Jan-Michael Sieg	KMP PrintTechnik AG	D
Member	Tamas Kadar	KIT	H
Member	Carsten Edelmeier	OCP	D
Member	Joachim Kretschmer	Pelikan	CH
Member	Pierre-Antoine Pluinage	Armor Group	F
Member	Javier Martinez	Consuprint	E

Secretariat

ETIRA aisbl/ivzw, European Toner & Inkjet Remanufacturers Association

Vincent van Dijk, secretary general

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