

# PRINT 21

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## LATEST NEWS

### Pack up your troubles at NSW Print Excellence awards

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**On a day when the stock market was in freefall and the world banking system looked as solid as a grass hut in a hurricane, NSW printers gathered to celebrate their achievements at the NSW Print Excellence awards. *Simon Enticknap* was there.**

The world's economic troubles were never far away and underscored an event at which, as *NSW Printing Industries* president, Neil Bown, remarked, everybody was aware of the big challenges that lie ahead. Certainly some tough times appear to be looming and, this time next year, not everybody will be around to celebrate.

Still, *que sera sera*, and it was good to cast aside such thoughts for a few hours and appreciate all that is fine and real and tangible about the print medium. The fire twirlers twirled their flames, the dancers shimmied and shook, and for a while at least it was possible to forget what might be over the horizon.

The work looked sensational. Entries that begged to be picked up and taken home included *The Gospel of John In Art* by Pettaras Press (Silver in the art reproduction category), *Judge A Book By It's Cover* by MacDonald & Masterson Printing (Gold in the self-promotion category), and *The Digitalpress Resource Manual* by Digitalpress (Gold in the specialty printing and embellishment categories).

How remarkable too that other examples of some of the finest print that modern man (and woman) can produce are so easily available every day on our news stands, supermarket shelves and in people's letterboxes.



*Peter Bounas from MacDonald & Masterson Printing accepts the gold award for best self-promotion.*

The judges claimed that the task of separating the winners from the also-rans was harder than ever. They always say that, don't they, although this time around they seemed to mean it. Head of the judging panel, Warwick Roden, recalled that the only cries of triumph heard at the judging session came when the adjudicators managed to find a fault with an entry, thereby making their job a little easier.

Everyone loves a winner, which means that Offset Alpine must be the most popular printer in NSW today. The company picked up the award for 'Printer of the Year 2008' as well as four gold medals including a repeat one in the business awards for educational and training initiatives. The Pettaras brothers vied for top honours with Steve collecting three golds and five silvers for Pettaras Press while Theo took home four golds and a silver for Digitalpress. Another big winner was the advertising agency, Armstrong, Miller and McLaren, which picked up nine golds with a range of partner printers including Sydney Allen Printers, Offset Alpine and The Digital Centre. In the hard-fought

labels category, Clear Image Labels edged out last year's winner Impresstik although the latter picked up a gold for innovation in the business awards.

It was noticeable too the extent to which the larger groups – Geon, Blue Star, IPMG (Hannanprint and Offset Alpine), PMP – have come to dominate many of the categories and the medal winners. While there were other regular medal winners too – the likes of Lilyfield and Lindsay Yates – there were no real bolters this time around, no new players who came out of nowhere to stake their claim for excellence. Maybe it's just too hard these days, or maybe it's just that the big established players have cornered the market in consistent, repeatable, high quality print. They have the systems and the equipment to do it well and as a result they now go on to the national awards to battle it out for top honours.

*Oh what a night! A crowd of 400 enjoy the best of NSW printing.*



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