

PrintNZ media release (July 2, 2026)

– incs pics: Opal Fibre Packaging New Zealand operations manager Jack Milton;
Opal Fibre Packaging Christchurch process engineering and continuous improvement lead
Matthew Moore –

Opal Fibre Packaging and Blue Star Wellington star in PrintNZ Training Awards

PrintNZ has named Blue Star Wellington bindery supervisor Rhys Fauvel and Opal Fibre Packaging Christchurch process engineering and continuous improvement lead Matthew Moore joint Trainers of the Year, with Opal Fibre Packaging New Zealand the Training Company of the Year.

Training Company of the Year

Opal Fibre Packaging New Zealand operations manager Jack Milton says while the award carries the company's name – “it really belongs to our employees, trainers, mentors and leaders who have invested so much into developing people”.

“This is our first time winning the award,” he says.

“Training has been a major focus for us over the past few years, but we've really accelerated it by making it part of our culture rather than just a compliance requirement.

“We encourage everyone to understand not only how to do their job, but why they do it. That deeper understanding creates better decision making and ownership.

“I'd simply like to thank everyone who has contributed to this achievement. Training only succeeds when people are willing to share their knowledge, mentor others and create opportunities for growth.”

An initiative he is particularly proud of is the firm's structured career pathways.

“We've promoted shift managers and multiple team leaders directly from our training programmes, showing our people that development leads to real opportunities. We also recognise every training achievement publicly at our monthly site meetings, celebrating success in front of the entire workforce because we believe learning deserves recognition.

“Our goal is to ensure every employee understands what opportunities are available and what they need to do to achieve them.”

Mr Milton says Opal Fibre Packaging considers training as “an investment, not a cost”.

“The return is seen in every part of the business. We have more-capable employees, stronger leaders, improved safety, better quality, higher productivity and greater employee engagement. Over the past two years we've achieved significant productivity improvements while developing our own people into leadership positions.

“It also builds loyalty because people know the company is investing in their future. When employees can see a genuine career pathway, they're more engaged, more confident and more willing to help others succeed.”

He adds that “this award isn't the finish line”.

“It's motivation to keep raising the standard. If we continue investing in our people, the results for our employees, our customers and our business will continue to follow.”

Trainer of the Year – Rhys Fauvel

Nominated for the award for the first time last year, Mr Fauvel – who like many Wellingtonians was prevented from attending this year's Christchurch presentation due to a storm disrupting flights – says being named joint winner is a "massive buzz".

"Training and developing our people is a core part of our culture and a key investment in the future of our business," says Mr Fauvel.

"Over the past five years, we have been nominated for Training Company of the Year and are proud to have won the award twice. We are also proud that Cheyne Lesa, our bindery manager, was recognised with the Trainer of the Year as well in 2024, along with Mia Fa'Amausili a finalist in 2025 for Apprentice of the Year.

"This recognition reflects the commitment and effort that our entire team puts into developing skills and supporting career growth.

"We currently have five apprentices working across our bindery and packaging departments, along with two employees studying for Diplomas in Print Management. We are committed to creating opportunities for people to learn, grow and build rewarding careers within the printing industry, and we are always looking for new talent and fresh perspectives to join our team as opportunities become available."

Mr Fauvel says he very much enjoys "being on the tools" side-by-side the apprentices and "watching them grow into competent operators".

"Working on the floor with our apprentices allows me to have constant engagement with them. This gives me better insight into how they are tracking, such as strengths and areas to improve.

"Some positive reinforcement in a stressful moment can make all the difference. I believe it takes a whole village – not one trainer, but all trainers. So much can be gained by taking bits and pieces from all experienced staff.

"Keeping all lines of communication open and accessible between all departments is hugely beneficial to young apprentices looking for answers they may not necessarily find in their own area.

"Watching them face challenges and overcome them, knowing that I had a small part in that, invokes a very proud 'dad' moment for me."

Trainer of the Year – Matthew Moore

A first-time finalist, Mr Moore says he is "thrilled" and "honoured" with being named joint Trainer of the Year.

"There's a definite focus on training and apprenticeships here at Opal," he says.

"Currently I'm overseeing four apprentices with four more studying a Level 2 qualification before looking to move on to apprenticeships. I went through the apprenticeship process at Opal a few years back with an even larger group.

"There is an understanding that the more highly trained our teams are, the more opportunities they can unlock and the better they can perform. Time, money and effort are all invested to ensure people have the best chance of not just achieving, but excelling."

One of the key mantras Mr Moore holds by is "making sure people feel safe to fail".

"It's got to be a trusting environment where they can try without feeling too scared about the consequences of getting it wrong. People learn a lot from getting things wrong and if they know that I'm there looking out for them, making sure nothing goes too wrong, then they're going to put their best effort in.

“This way they try things – some work and some don’t – and sometimes they even come up with new, improved ways of doing things.

“Likewise, I make it clear that they can ask me the same questions as many times as they need to. If they haven’t understood it the first time, then I can find a different way to convey the information.”

Mr Moore describes an “immense sense of satisfaction and fulfilment” at seeing training efforts reflected in the strong progression of workmates.

“Being in the trainer role provides me with a source of pride, while also validating and testing my own knowledge (which I like). Personally, I absolutely love seeing people grow, learn new things and then perform highly. Quite often, training and observing people as they learn is the highlight of my day.

“I work a lot in continuous improvement and in my opinion it’s hard to find an improvement that will produce a better return on investment than providing comprehensive and varied training opportunities.”

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