



# OUR STORY SO FAR IN PRINT

Print's story is one of invention and reinvention. Ever since the introduction of moveable type in the mid 15th century, new processes and technologies continually advance and automate the industry.

Contributing to a global sector with a predicted value of \$814.5 billion in 2022\*, print businesses are hugely diverse. Service providers range from large-scale industrial manufacturing operations producing millions of copies, to corporate print departments, to niche producers focused on creating high-value, specialist applications.

Print buyers come from corporate clients, SMEs, agencies and publishers, while the rise of online ordering platforms has opened a world of personalised print-on-demand to individual consumers, from greetings cards, invitations and photo merchandise, to books, art prints and individualised gifts.

Behind these varied operations sits a complex supply ecosystem: industrial machine producers, digital technology, software and ink developers, system integrators, and manufacturers and resellers of consumables.

## A new era for print

Like every other communications medium, print has been confronted by the advent of new channels for communication, never more so than with the arrival of the internet. Digital platforms have challenged the purpose of products like newspapers, books, magazines, directories and business stationery, causing print volumes to decline. Likewise, the marketing mix – once heavily dominated by magazine advertising, brochures, catalogues, posters, flyers, direct mail – has been reshaped by digital, with many brands moving budgets to digital platforms.

But as consumers react to a rising sense of digital overload, printed books are experiencing a resurgence and brand owners are recognising print's power to cut through digital clutter. Even digital innovators are coming back to printed customer magazines, targeted catalogues and personalised direct mail for their unique potential to engage the emotions and stimulate purchase. In a world where experience is paramount, the power of digital print-on-demand to deliver individualised content is still to be fully realised.

## At the heart of a digital revolution

When AD started out in 1984, print was once again on the cusp of radical change. Within our first decade as an agency specialising in print and graphic arts, we'd lived through the DTP revolution, the advance of digital prepress technology and the introduction of the first digital printing press.

We've watched an analogue industry characterised by isolated processes embrace the benefits of press automation, digital production and move towards efficient, streamlined workflows producing smaller quantities on demand. This sustained digital revolution in print has been the central theme of our work for a rapidly evolving client base in this sector.

## We led the charge for the digital print revolution

Over 35 years, we've promoted some of the most exciting brands in the press and prepress market. Channelling our experience of marketing disruptive technologies, we've helped to drive acceptance of digital print technology in a market with a deep legacy in litho and built credibility for the digital 'newcomers' who now dominate the vendor landscape.

## We're joining the dots for digital workflows

We played our part in the dramatic revolution in digital prepress, making the case for computer to plate (CTP), digital proofing, pre-flighting, file preparation, colour measurement and asset management. Today's digital print workflows are becoming virtually seamless, while in-line and near-line finishing processes increase end-to-end efficiency and control, pointing to further automation opportunities.

## We opened the gate for ecommerce in print

Since the late 90s, network innovations, MIS, cloud technology and SaaS have challenged outdated ways of working and created valuable new platforms for print supply chains to harmonise communication, movement and validation of data. This enables e-commerce models which are transforming print businesses, adding value for customers and creating new markets for print.

## A NETWORK OF INFLUENCE

We know the global graphic arts and print media inside out, having cultivated these relationships closely for 35 years. Our work with the major international print event brands like Ipex, drupa and FESPA has brought us into regular direct contact with virtually every influential publisher, editor, analyst, reporter and consultant in this market.

We attend print shows, conferences, open houses and seminars all over the world to maintain an international perspective, as well as vertical market events in publishing and marketing.

We're connected with the trade associations, lobbying organisations, user groups and other communities that serve this audience, and we've been behind major campaigns on sustainability and youth engagement.

And since 2000, we've organised our pre-Drupa Media Conference in partnership with Messe Dusseldorf, bringing together a community of leading editors from around the world every four years to connect with exhibitors and learn about the latest innovations and trends.

This is our print story so far. Now let us bring your stories to life.

Visit [adcomms.co.uk/AD2020](https://adcomms.co.uk/AD2020) to find out more.



As a sector specialist in print, packaging and visual communications, we connect with a diverse range of businesses, production processes, technologies and materials, across multiple vertical markets with many commercial drivers.

Our work in print takes us into a fascinating ecosystem shaped by technology, customers and wider social trends.

