

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:02] DC: Print Buying UKvUSA is a series dedicated to helping printers create stronger, more meaningful, and more profitable relationships with print customers on both sides of the pond. I'm Deborah Corn, Founder of Project Peacock and Principal at Print Media Centr.

[0:00:22] MP: And I'm Matthew Parker, the Champion of Print at profitableprintrelationships.com.

[0:00:26] DC: We may not always agree, but that's when it gets interesting. Turn up the volume, get out your notepad, and welcome to the program.

[EPISODE]

[0:00:40] DC: Hey, everybody. Welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse. This is Deborah Corn, your Intergalactic Ambassador. More specifically, we are here with the UKvUSA Podcast, which means that Matthew Parker is on the other end of this microphone. Matthew Parker?

[0:00:59] MP: Hello, Deborah Corn, and how are you today?

[0:01:02] DC: Good. I would just like you to know that I'm getting slammed for my English accent.

[0:01:07] MP: Well, that's understandable.

[0:01:10] DC: Yes.

[0:01:11] MP: Trust me, if I try to do an American accent, I get slammed, too. So, I just stick in my comfort zone and stick to what I know I'm good at.

[0:01:18] DC: Yes. That was actually the only thing that gave me comfort was a Brit trying to do a southern accent. I was like, "Oh, I am light-years away from him." I'm like a freaking

professional voiceover artist compared to his southern accent. Okay, we have a topic today that is from Matthew's head. So, buckle in, and I'm going to kick it over to Matthew.

[0:01:42] MP: Okay. Today's topic is who is going to thrive and who's going to struggle. I thought it might be interesting for us to have a chat about the different types of print seller. I've taken that in its broadest sense. Not just people who've got machinery, but people who sell print and have a think about who's going to do well over the coming years and who's going to struggle. What do you think of that as a topic, Deborah?

[0:02:12] DC: I think it is a fantastic topic, Matthew. Go ahead. Let's hear your gems of wisdom.

[0:02:18] MP: Whoa, okay. I appreciate it. The podcast now, whilst I got a compliment from Deborah. Excellent.

[0:02:24] DC: Well, I was being kind before you started. I'll give you the chance to make a good point. Go ahead.

[0:02:30] MP: Okay. No, I'll put it in my show notes, "Deborah was nice to Matthew for five seconds."

[0:02:33] DC: Yes, at 1.02, Deborah gave Matthew a kind word.

[0:02:39] MP: Excellent. Well, thank you for the kind word, Deborah. I look forward to many unkind words in the coming part of the show. What I did was I had a think and I came up with two types of supplier who, I think, are going to do well in the coming years. They may not be the ones that everyone's thinking about. I also came up with two types of supplier that I think are going to struggle over the coming years. Probably, one of them is no surprise. The other one might be a surprise. We'll wait and see. Just building up a tension for the end of the show there. We'll put that one on last, so you'll have to wait until the last minute before I reveal that one.

I'm going to start with one that I probably a while ago, I wasn't sure we're going to survive in the print environment. I hate to admit it, but I'll do it before Deborah says it. I was wrong. I think that a really good space for the high street printer, the one with return environment, the one where

you can walk through the door and go, “Hey, I want this fired on.” Now, they have come under as beyond the no illusion, they have come up with threats from the online print environment, because it's very easy for lots of people nowadays to upload their product onto an online printer and get it done, and it's cheaper.

However, I think that there will still be a need for people who go through the door and go, “Help. I need my business cards due in the next three hours, because I've got a flight coming up. Help. How do I do this? I've got no idea how I'm going to design this flyer. Can you do it for me? Help. How do I market my business?” The type of on-the-street print store that I'm thinking of has its own equipment. I think that's vitally important. There's a number out there that rely on a franchise and they go, “Sure, we'll take your artwork and then we'll send it away to the central printing hub. They'll get it down and we'll have it back for you in a few days.”

I think they're going to struggle because they will come up against the online printers. The people who've got the machinery in the back and go, “Sure, no problem. I'll have that out for you in two or three hours,” they're the people who are going to do well, and they'll be able to charge a good price for that as well, because nobody else can do it. Until we sort out drone delivery, and that's going to take a while yet, they're going to carry on being the only people who can do it.

The really intelligent people in this area are also offering design. They're maybe offering a bit of website help. They're able to upsell from just the basic bit of print that maybe the person as customer, has walked in for. They're on my prediction list for surviving and thriving. What do you reckon, Deborah?

[0:05:26] DC: Well, there's a lot of track that has to be laid before that is going to be a situation, at least where I live. The only what you call walk-in printers here are FedEx office, or going to – in a Staples store, or what's the other one? The UPS store has printing as well. None of those places you could walk in as far as I know and say, “Hi, I need help marketing my business.” They're complete output places. There are printers in my area, but again, they're the printers that the regular consumers, or the civilians would be afraid of to walk in, because they look like you need to know things before you walk in there.

I'm not really sure. But now let me give you the flip side of that. It's possible, but everybody knows if they need something really fast to go to FedEx office, or to Staples, or to the UPS store. That's literally what they do, so people know that if they're not going to order online for some reason. The flip side of that is my good friend, William Crabtree, who's also the co-host of the Printer Chat Podcast, he owns Tampa Media. Tampa printer is what would be a commercial print shop where people would walk in and say, "Hi, I need business cards right now." Even though he primarily sells online, he has done enough digital marketing and has a presence that people know they could go to his print shop and get marketing consulting and see the different types of paper that you could have a business card and all the different finishings and things of that nature.

Yes, in that sense, it is the way to do it. I was actually going to say, one of the sellers that will be around and thrive through technology. Do you want me to elaborate on that now, or do you want me to bring it up later?

[0:07:42] MP: Meet up in just a second. I'm just going to circle back and go from what you've said. You've got a slightly different landscape in the US to over here. We've got some smaller franchises over here, and some people –

[0:07:55] DC: I'm just going to stop you for one second, because I said where I live. These are my only options. If you go to New York City, there's little different options there.

[0:08:05] MP: Okay. I'm going to say, around where you live, then UPS and FedEx are going to carry on. They're going to do well with that type of business. Yes, it will be commodity only if you like, but it will be people who can get that output out there straight away. Over here, it's slightly different in that we have a number of franchises, and even in a town that is about 15 minutes away from me, and yeah, it's a fairly country town, you can walk in and get that done. I think they'll continue to do well. But they do need to diversify as well into. UPS and FedEx have effectively printers of diversification to help them add more on to their core business. It works likewise.

[0:08:45] DC: And everybody knows where to find one, and they're all over the place.

[0:08:49] MP: Yeah, absolutely. From that point of view, yeah, I think they will do well. Tell me more about printers with technology, because you think they're going to do well.

[0:08:59] DC: No. I think the technology itself is going to be the thing that does well as a seller. Whether that is, I would normally say, Mr. Google, because Mr. Google does a very good job if you can afford to basically pay a salesperson's salary, but dump it into Google. However, the tide is shifting, Matthew Parker. I believe the print shops, or any business that tells anything, who can start getting a grip right now on how the AI is going to search for suppliers, is going to be in a very good position. From the people that I've spoken to, the answer to how you do that is to literally make sure that any question you think could be asked about printing is, the answer to that question is somewhere in the text of your website, because people search questions. How do I? Where do I? What is this called?

It's not the same way where you just put a keyword, like for Google, and anything about that keyword shows up. This is a very specific search. I don't know about you, but I have given up on Google now to search anything. I could not care less what Google says, because when I do it through the GPT engines, I get a much more tailored results. Of course, I check the facts, Matthew. I make sure that these are legitimate sources and whatever it might be. I cannot even tell you that the system has helped me fix my Mac, has told me which replacement remote control I need just by taking a photo of my old remote control, because I didn't want to go behind my television and find out what the serial numbers were and try to type that in, like one of those crazy passwords that, "Do you want this 97-character password?" No, thank you. Once that is figured out, that will become the best salesperson in the world.

[0:11:20] MP: I think that's a great answer. Anyone who can manage that, I think, will do very, very well, indeed. Yeah, it is. I read a whole blog recently all about how AI has added another layer of search into this that people have got to get to grips with. It's very different from managing it from your traditional SEO. Personally, I wouldn't worry too much about SEO these days.

[0:11:41] DC: Oh, no. Google fired all those people. They're like, wait, this is – they even know what's irrelevant now.

[0:11:47] MP: Yeah, even for a long time, it's been the longtail keyword, the complicated one that's got the answers.

[SPONSOR MESSAGE]

[0:11:55] DC: Girls Who Print provides women in print and graphic communications with information, resources, events, and mentorship to help them navigate their careers and the industry. As the largest independent network of Women in Print and a nonprofit organization, our global mission to provide resources, skill building, education, and support for women to lead, inspire, and empower has never been stronger, or more accessible. Through our member platform and program, as well as regional groups forming around the world, your access to Girls Who Print is just a click away. Gentlemen, you are most welcome to join us as allies. Get involved and get in power today. Link in the show notes.

[EPISODE CONTINUED]

[0:12:42] DC: As a matter of fact, Google is trying to compete. I read somewhere. I wish I could remember the source, so everybody fact-check me. I read somewhere that Google is now going to give you what they believe are the top results for what you're actually searching for, as opposed to the results that they want you to find, which is what's been going on for the last however long they've been in existence. That is in response to the fact that people are flocking off of Google and searching on the AI.

As well, YouTube has taken over as the largest search engine, according to a couple of people I spoke to yesterday. I'm not very sourcey today, but I'm a source person. I apologize to everybody out there. I will search it, or you can search it, but the people who told me are not crazy.

[0:13:36] MP: Thank you. We've got your retail high street copy printer as a survivor. We've got printers who manage AI as a survivor. The next one I'm going to throw –

[0:13:47] DC: AI as a search engine.

[0:13:49] MP: Yes. Sorry, I should have been more specific. Printers who manage AI as a search engine as a survivor. The third one I'm going to throw into the mix is smaller print management companies. Now, I want to be very specific here. I think, again, the landscape may be slightly different in the US. I'm not talking about the big print management companies that are out there. We'll come on to them later. I am, in the UK at least, there's a good number of companies who are far more than print brokers or print resellers, but they do do print management, and they will find the right solution to what you want to do. They'll give you the advice. They'll manage copywriters for you, designers, all that sort of thing. I believe that there's still a large number of smaller companies out there that are crying out for this type of help.

They don't want to go to all these suppliers themselves. They are probably spending far too much on it, but they don't know where they're spending too much, or how to reduce it. They're being ignored by the larger print management companies because they're not big enough if you're a massive print management company. I think that they'll continue to do well, because I think there's still a good number of potential customers out there who haven't come across this solution yet, and would welcome it with open arms.

It's not necessarily good news for the imprinter, but I think these print management companies will do well. Do you have many companies like that in the US, do you know, Deborah? Because I've not come across some really.

[0:15:22] DC: I know of one called Managed Solutions that was started by people that used to work with me at FCB, like the director of production, a couple of the production people. Foot Cone & Belting was an advertising agency. Merged now. I don't even know what name it's under. But they started a boutique management service for production. I used them when I was in the advertising agencies, because it was like hiring a hired gun. They would come in. They knew everything that needed to be done. They could take the project by themselves and go away.

I would agree with you that that is not going to go away, because we're talking about the David Druckers. We're talking about the Noel Toccis, who I do the Making it With Print Podcast with. They don't even call them projects. They call them productions. These productions are bespoke, customized, high-end productions, like they call them. The intricacy there, regular civilians could

never ever achieve that. Everybody can hire an advertising agency. I do believe there is a one layer left of people focused solely on craft and not on commodity.

If you need them, you have the money; it's like the joke, if you have giraffe money, you don't have to ask how much a giraffe is. People with giraffe money are hiring these companies. If you go to Cannes, to the awards, you're going to see all those, the work of a lot of those people there, even though it's also tied to advertising agencies.

[0:17:07] MP: I think also, at least in the UK, there's a layer of companies that aren't looking to do that level of production, but are happy to come into a company and go, "We'll manage your print for you." Yeah. I used to go into companies and go in and say, "I can probably save you 30%." That's what I say on average when I go into a company, just by looking at. Not by beating printers down by 30%, but by looking at specifications, by looking at what jobs goes to what printer, and all those sorts of things. Yeah, none of what I was doing was going to get, be noticed at Cannes, or anything high profile. But there was a lot of day-to-day business prints, and I think there's still a need for that. I think that there are companies out there that can do well out of that.

Well, if you look at things like hotels, just as an example, there's a small hotel chain, they use a lot of print. But there's no one printer who's probably going to say, "Hey, I can manage all that for you. I can do the design." It's just not in their comfort zone. A good print management company can do all that. Or they might be able to do more transactional prints and show people about multi-touch engagement with their audience, which they might not come across before. I think there is a good space still in the print-selling arena for these types of people.

[0:18:25] DC: We did a whole podcast on this, just so I'll make sure I link it in the bottom about print management services.

[0:18:31] MP: Cool. Excellent. Yes, that would be good. It'll come up again in a moment. Do you think we've covered all the survivors? Do you think there's any more survivors out there, thrivers out there?

[0:18:41] DC: I have one. There's an African proverb. I think it's African, where, look at me with no sources today.

[0:18:48] MP: I was going to say, what's your source for this?

[0:18:51] DC: Exactly. Allegedly, there is an African proverb that says, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." I believe that the era of networks for printing are the ones who are going to be last standing here. Because when it comes to selling, you turn on a button and you say, "Okay, I'm ready for the flood of consumer work that I can't get any other way, because I can't sell to a hundred different people all over the country, or as close to my store as possible," if that's the goal of the person who's purchasing the print. But when it comes to sales, the sales are already there, because they're coming through Etsy and eBay and Zazzle and Canva, and the AI tools are making files now.

I believe that the networks are where this sell – and it's because the selling doesn't have to be done. You're just taking orders, and it's the type of print that you just take an order for. It's not coming from your customers. It's coming from wherever. There's a strategic reason why it's coming to your print shop. Either you're close to where the final destination needs to be, or you have that particular equipment that's required for that job, so you're getting it. It is also a way for that same print shop not to say no to anybody, because they can put those same jobs through the network and find someone who has a web press if they don't. Find someone who can make flexible packaging if they can't. Last standing, the networks.

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[0:20:47] MP: Do you need some direction or new ideas for your business? Would sales goals setting and accountability improve your revenues? Or do you have a member of staff who could be performing better? I'm Matthew Parker, the Champion of Print at profitableprintrelationships.com, and I offer a personal mentoring service. Together, we work out exactly what you need. We create a personal mentoring program for you, and then we speak twice a month. You get set goals and action points to make sure you progress.

What makes me different is that I'm the buyer. I've been approached by over 1,400 different printing companies, so I know what works, and I know what doesn't. If you'd like to find out more, go to profitableprintrelationships.com, click the training tab, and then go to mentoring. Or, alternatively, just hit me up on LinkedIn. I look forward to working with you.

[EPISODE CONTINUED]

[0:21:41] MP: When you're talking about the networks, we went straight from Etsy and people like that, and Canva, to people who might need a web press, and I'm not joining the dot sellers. Tell me a little bit more about what you mean by network.

[0:21:53] DC: I'm saying that there are tons. I mean, even if you look at Shutterfly, okay? That's not the best – Well, it is an example, because they are printers and they have tons of presses and giant warehouses. In that sense, their website is selling for them. They spend money on advertising, telling people what they can get on the website. You buy the print, and it goes to their facility. There are other places where you can go on, iwantapillowofmycat.com. That person more than likely does not have a press in their house, or anything like that. They are taking that order and they're putting it through whatever system they're part of. Then it gets produced.

Again, technology is selling print and a network is fulfilling it. I don't know how many networks, or how many physical printing plants will be needed, ultimately. I mean, this seems it's the way it's going to me, putting aside bespoke printing, customize specialty, high-end, all of that stuff will always have – there's a reason why the letter press is still around for hundreds and hundreds of years, right? That pushing the envelope craft is not going anywhere, but less and less and less people will be skewing that way.

[0:23:36] MP: In my experience, iwantacatpillow.com, and I'm off to buy my cat pillow after this call. [Iwantacatpillow.com](http://iwantacatpillow.com), they'll probably align just to one supplier, or very few suppliers. What I am aware of is at least a couple of big online printers with a good presence, who are purely virtual printers. I won't name names at this point, but there's two, maybe three, actually, that I can think of off the top of my head, who either don't own any hardware, or who have hardware

for the easy bits, but they don't have any hardware for when someone orders quite a lot of the products on their site.

[0:24:15] DC: That's what I was saying about the web press. Even if you have regular, so let's just say I also have regular customers and they come in with some job that I know the best option is a web press, but I don't have one. I can send it through my own network and find somebody who has a web press. It comes back to me. That person shouldn't need to know that that has happened, as long as I as their point of contact and the person they're paying takes full responsibility for whatever happens outside of their facility.

[0:24:48] MP: The one thing I'd say about the networks is I think they are a way to make sure that you're getting, hopefully, regular work in without having to do any sales, you've got to be really, really competitive. It is a commodity market. I would say the majority of printing companies that I know have not optimized their production well enough to be able to deal with this, is only when you have to be happy to deal with an awful lot of products, where you get a run of one, or five, or 10. If you can't manage the front end of that order and the back end of that order, you are really going to struggle, particularly at the pricing that's been demanded in that marketplace. I've seen the workflows that are involved around these. If you're set up for it, no problem at all. If you're not set up for these products, you haven't got a hope of trying to fulfill it. I know it's one –

[0:25:46] DC: That's the point. You can't even get into the network unless you're prepared to get into it.

[0:25:51] MP: Because I know one printing company that wants to enter this market, and they just exited from it very quickly, because they knew there was too much culture change in their company to be able, not – yeah, it wasn't a question. They could have afforded the investment of the workflows, but the culture change would be too much for them.

[0:26:10] DC: Yeah. I don't disagree with you at all on that. I would say, that for the last, I mean, 10 years, five years, I mean, certainly since the pandemic, the writing has to be on the wall that the industry is evolving, the world is evolving. I mean, there is so many of my service providers, I have nothing to do with. I don't even know who they are half the time. It's okay. Now, it's

always okay, until there's a problem and you have to hunt somebody down. I understand that. Put that to the side.

There has been years of talking about workflow and automation, and these were big terms, because they weren't really drilling down. It was like, you have to optimize your entire print job, and you have to integrate this for \$75,000. Those companies have gotten smart now. There are some that just sell an online storefront. There are some that just will help you get out of pre-press faster and check the files to make sure that they're okay. There are some that can give you more visibility into predictive maintenance. The press doesn't need more cyan ink in the middle of the run. Paper purchasing, bulk purchasing. There are a lot of advantages to it.

I do have to say that one of the reasons why this is on my brain so much in this way, full disclosure, is I've just completed two podcast conferences. One with Fiery, and I had no idea all the things a DFE could do. It eliminates a lot of everything I'm just saying now. The other one was Gelato, and GelatoConnect, and everything that they're doing there. That's why it's on my brain, because I really did learn so much about how this technology can really help a print shop stay around, for as long as it wants to stay around.

Now, I'm not a spokesperson for any of these companies. I learned with the audience when I host these things. I would say, listen to the conference yourself, or just go to their website and see if it's something that is right for you. If it is, then you can get into this game.

[0:28:36] MP: Fantastic. Right. Let's switch this around now. We've talked about who's going to survive and who's going to thrive. Now, it's time to look at the flip side of everything and have a chat about who we think is going to be doomed over the coming years. I think the conversation we've just been having about the networks leads me nicely in to my first suggestion of who's going to struggle as print evolves. That is your traditional commercial printer. The one who's got a couple of LIFO presses, maybe some digital, they've got a sales team, they go out to companies, they're not expecting any walk-in traffic, but they are going out proactively to companies and trying to find customers who still spend a reasonable amount of print, who haven't gone to print management, who aren't putting it all online and going, "Actually, you should deal with us."

I think that's becoming a really competitive landscape. It's been commoditized a long time ago. I think it's very hard for any printer who is not doing something unusual to get into a customer, first of all, to actually get in to have a dialogue with a customer, but also, to actually give a reason why they should be considered, unless it's price. I think these people are going to be gradually squeezed out of the marketplace. I say that with great sadness, but unless you're doing something unusual, unless you're mastering AI, unless you've got that printer network, unless you're talking to print management companies, you are going to struggle. What do you think, Deborah?

[SPONSOR MESSAGE]

[0:30:14] DC: Are you looking to elevate your game, take your bottom-line customer relationships and events to the next level? Then I want to work with you. I'm Deborah Corn, the Intergalactic Ambassador to the Printerverse. I engage with a vast global audience of print and marketing professionals across all stages of their careers. They are seeking topical information and resources, new ways to serve their customers and connect with them, optimize processes for their communications and operations and they meet the products and services and partnership you offer to get to their next level. Print Media Centr offers an array of unique opportunities that amplify your message and support your mission across the Printerverse. Let's work together, bring the right people together, and move the industry forward together. Link in the show notes. Engage long and prosper.

[EPISODE CONTINUED]

[0:31:17] DC: I mean, thank you for coming to my TED Talk. This what I've been saying forever. Unless, that business is actively creating a relationship, or emotional connection with their community, like Will the printer does. He also, if you search anything in Tampa about printing, he will come up, because he spent years working with Mr. Google that way. It's a crazy thing, Matthew. You know, when you want something, you have to search it. You have to look for it. Unless, you're like, "Oh, wait. I heard something about that. Oh, there's a place around here. I just got something in my business mailbox about how we can set up a new business meeting." We talk about this all the time. Not a new business for the printer, but a new business for the

client. What are their needs for the next quarter, for the year, and how can you come up with a plan to do that?

Yes, unless there is consultative selling, unless there is, we would like to come and talk to you about the holes in your marketing, and I'll just use a local car dealer, not somebody who's attached to one of the car makers, but just a local person. Maybe they have a used car lot, or something like that, and they have a couple of them. If that person's going to keep doing the little ads in the circulars with a 1997 Dodge, whatever, for \$1,000, or whatever it is, unless somebody goes there and says, "Look, here's all of the people with your same business within five miles of here. You're all doing the same thing." Yes, of course, people are looking for used cars. They're looking for a very specific thing. I need a minivan. I need a car for Uber, whatever it might be. They're looking for some – I need a car for my kid to go to drive to work, or go to college. You know what I'm saying? They have very specific things in mind and price is a big one.

There are certainly ways for people to stay updated on that. For example, have the dealer give out a QR code magnet for somebody's refrigerator. Every week, they can scan the QR code and see the new cars that are available on the lot, or create some VIP promotion, where you learn about the cars that they just got before they start advertising them. Because you actually know what they're looking for, maybe you could even get a text alert that says, something's in the car, but none of that happens without marketing. None of that happens without educating the consumers, the community, the neighbors that this is possible.

To your point, unless smaller local printing companies are willing to do something like that, and it's difficult, Matthew. I get it. Some people believe that, "Hey, this is what I do. I don't do the other stuff." Fantastic. There are probably people you're printing for who can help you with the marketing end of it, with the design end of it. Talk to your own customer. See if you can make a business deal. Maybe they're the better people to go pitch and you come along as the expert in how you're going to output all of these wonderful ideas.

Sitting passively and waiting for people to walk through the door, although in this example, you said they weren't walking through the door, they were actively seeking accounts. I get that too, but it's going to be harder and harder as people are just using cellphones and not – the offices

are closing, or moving, or have shrunk and not everybody's there every day. It's just going to be more difficult to get a hold of people, as opposed to just calling up a potential customer and say, "We want to come over and show you how we can help you increase your revenue, get more people into your restaurant, get more people enrolled in your community college, get more people to show up for the play that somebody's that's coming to town." That's my thought.

[0:35:49] MP: I think it's going to be increasingly difficult, at least at a slightly higher level. I mean, a lot of the people you said, they'll probably engage with the local copy shop, or they'll be ordering their prints online. Once you get to the next level of company up, say the bigger car dealer, so many times now, they've been put into a chain of car dealers and they've got their prints sorted out with the print management company, or it's an only one –

[0:36:13] DC: That's why I said. I'm not talking about somebody who works for General Motors, one of those dealerships. There are independent people that have used car lots. There are car washes and things like that.

[0:36:26] MP: Most of those people, they're not generating enough print for a decent sized commercial printer to be able to fill their presses these days.

[0:36:35] DC: Okay. They're going to have to fill them with 10 different things. Do we actually wait to the last five minutes of this podcast to have a fight?

[0:36:47] MP: Well, that's quite good, actually, that we have well lasted that long. Yes, even if they get 10 people, it's not enough a lot of the time for these traditional commercial printers, because those 10 people, yeah, one or two will go and use their presses. The rest will be buying online print. They'll be saying, "I don't need print, because I've mastered online advertising, or I'm doing completely different stuff." They're really, really going to struggle. I think that's why they're doomed. Who else would you say is doomed?

[0:37:17] DC: Matthew Parker and his attitude.

[0:37:21] MP: I'll take that. I prefer realism, as opposed to –

[0:37:27] DC: Well, okay. Now you've got me. I am Deborah, the realist Corn here. I don't disagree with you, but you're suggesting that all of the income has to come from the path I just said. To me, again, I'm not a printer. I know it's an expensive business. There's leases, there's people, there's properties involved. What I would say is that in my opinion, you have the switch that goes on, because you have the technology in place, where you could take all these online orders all day long to fill your presses. Then you consultative sell with everybody else and you bring in the people that need you to actually speak with them to work with them.

Yes, maybe you only need two salespeople now. Because any of the sales that those other people were bringing in is now just coming through a computer, an online system. I hear what you're saying, Matthew, and I agree with you. The shelf life of a standalone, independent print shop that is not printing very specialized something is going to be struggling to find, to make them money, unless they have something else going.

To me, turning on the switch, and it is turning on a switch, because if it's too much stuff coming in, you can say, "I don't want any more work. I need to catch up first." Because to your point, there are rules and regulations. If somebody says that it's got to be delivered at this time, I believe, you have to deliver it as it's supposed to be at the price it is. You only accept the work, or the work only comes to you within your parameters. You are essentially working for that big commodity in the sky. But it is a cash register. It's a cash register.

[0:39:29] MP: It's only works if you've got the running systems in place.

[0:39:33] DC: Yes, Matthew. But they're out there.

[0:39:36] MP: The majority of printers do not have the not –

[0:39:40] DC: Correct.

[0:39:41] MP: - right distance, or right –

[0:39:42] DC: How many years does the industry have to say, "Hello. Hello. You should really workflow automation, automation, automation." I mean, it's been years and years and years. But

I get it. Not everybody can do it. I completely understand that. Then, your plan B might be to something else that is interesting, Matthew, is that if you look at Jamie the printer's company, Innvoke Print Marketing, what they're doing to diversify is buying up other print shops that do things that they don't do. They even bought a photographer, because a lot of their clients had needs for still photography for things. Now they can control all of that.

Now, they saw that labels and flexible packaging is an opportunity. They bought a print shop, or label business that does that, because they're not the experts in it. They want the experts who are already doing it to do it. Then their team goes in and learns how to sell for them. There is a way to also create your own network, whether if you're in the position of mergers and acquisitions, that is popping off in the United States, because people either get me out of here, or I see a great opportunity to get a wide format business, instead of bringing a couple of pieces of equipment here and then trying to figure out how to do it. I know of print shops that are buying other printers' lists and then just shutting down the print shops.

We're just going to take the competition out of here. We don't need any of their stuff, and we're just going to buy the list and shut it down. You've got to be in one of these positions, or you will eventually, like anything else. I mean, did we ever really think that book stores would be gone? I mean, most of them are, unless there's a specialty bookstore. Most of the bookstores are gone, because a more efficient and effective way of getting a book in your hand came to be. That is just the way it goes in modernization.

I mean, people once sold horses for transportation, and they got put out of business by the automobile, right? That's why it's still called horsepower when they describe an engine and things like that. We're in this moment of time of an event horizon, and it's not about the effectiveness of the channel. It's the fact that the printing industry needs to embrace this modern technology, communication technology, the way people want to order, the way they want to talk to people that they buy from or not, the way they learn, the way they search for things. Any business that is part of that system and is still something that people need or want is going to stay around.

Anybody who has something that people need and want and isn't meeting the moment by allowing them to purchase, communicate the way they want to, get informed the way that they want to, it's like anything else. You're just going to stop being part of that system.

[0:43:15] MP: I'm going to throw a bomb in there for my last suggestion then. Oh, by the way, I will say that I live near at least four thriving bookstores, all within less than half an hour of me.

[0:43:26] DC: Yes, but there's also Hobbits running around where you live.

[0:43:32] MP: Not quite like that. Anyway, my last suggestion for people who are going to struggle is large print management companies. They've gone through so many mergers, they've got to the point where they're no longer being as creative as they should do. There's only way for thin margins left. I think they're really going to struggle going forward, because I think some of their clients are getting fed up with them. Some of them are really challenging them now. The way they've been set up, I think they're going to struggle to actually make a profit, particularly those with an open book policy. I think it will be very interesting to watch that landscape going forward.

I predict that there may well be some large print management companies that struggle to survive. They're the ones with all the technology and all the networks and everything that should work. I think they, again, it's down to not selling creatively enough. I think they're going to struggle.

[0:44:42] DC: Okay. We shall see if that happens, Matthew Parker. I want to thank everybody for their time and attention today. And always, if you are not aware, all of our podcasts are also playing on printfmradio.com, a new 24-hour, seven days a week, 365 days a year Internet radio station that I opened. It is the first in the world, dedicated to print and graphic communications. We have a schedule on printfmradio.com, so you can see when the podcast from Matthew and I are playing, as well as all of the library of Podcasts From the Printerverse. Plus, we have submissions from other industry podcasts to mix it up. Yeah, I'm really excited about that. Look out for Matthew's LinkedIn post about our podcast. They are always a debate in the comments. It's always interesting. Until next time, everybody. Listen long, print long, and prosper.

[END OF EPISODE]

[0:45:53] DC: Thanks for listening to Podcasts From the Printerverse. Please subscribe, click some stars, and leave us a review. Connect with us through printmediacentr.com, we'd love to hear your feedback on our shows and topics that are of interest for future broadcasts. Until next time, thanks for joining us. Print long and prosper.

[END]

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Podcast About Print Management Services: <https://podcastsfromtheprinterverse.com/ukvusa-print-management-services-hope-or-hype/>

William Crabtree: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/will-crabtree-b130a346/>

TampaPrinter: <https://link.tampaprinter.com/mobile-landing-page/>

Noel Tocci: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/noeltocci/>

David Drucker: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/david-drucker-b1b5946/>

Innvoke Print Marketing: <https://innvoke.com/>

Matthew Parker: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/profitableprintrelationships/>

Profitable Print Relationships: <https://profitableprintrelationships.com>

Deborah Corn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/deborahcorn/>

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