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09.-17. Mai 2028
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Print markets in transition: drupa insights highlights new growth opportunities

Print is evolving within the media mix – and print service providers are evolving with it. They are broadening their portfolios, moving into new applications and increasingly crossing traditional segment boundaries. Recent analysis featured on drupa insights explores where these shifts are creating new business opportunities and what it takes to expand successfully into new markets.

Print gains ground in the integrated media mix

Sixty-nine percent of print buyers surveyed expect the share of print in their communications and media mix to increase over the next twelve months. Rather than signalling a return to traditional communication models, this points to a more deliberate allocation of roles across different channels: print is being deployed where physical presence, precise targeting and tactile quality can make a distinctive contribution to communication.

At the same time, expectations of print service providers are changing. Customers are looking for faster response times, flexible run lengths, personalisation and, increasingly, digital and sustainable production processes. These requirements are particularly influential in labels and packaging, where they are shaping purchasing decisions, production strategies and procurement. As a result, technology is increasingly being assessed in terms of the tangible value it creates across the value chain.

Convergence opens up new business opportunities

At the same time, traditional boundaries between segments of the printing industry are becoming increasingly fluid. Print service providers are broadening their portfolios, moving into adjacent applications and serving additional markets. This development is being driven by changing customer expectations,



Messe Düsseldorf GmbH
Postfach 10 10 06
40001 Düsseldorf
Messeplatz
40474 Düsseldorf
Deutschland

+49 211 4560 01
info@messe-duesseldorf.de
www.messe-duesseldorf.de

Geschäftsführung
Wolfram N. Diener (Vorsitzender)
Marius Berlemann
Bernhard J. Stempfle

Vorsitzender des Aufsichtsrats
Dr. Stephan Keller

Amtsgericht
Düsseldorf HRB 63
USt-IdNr. DE 119 360 948
St.Nr. 105/5830/0663

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Messe Düsseldorf**



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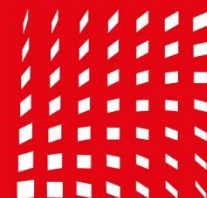
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new production capabilities and the search for growth beyond established core businesses.

The extent of this shift is illustrated by a 2025 Alliance Insights survey of North American print service providers: 83 percent of the 339 respondents reported serving at least one segment outside their core business. To provide an international perspective, Alliance Insights supplemented the survey with research into verified business developments across Europe, Asia, South America, the Middle East and Africa. Among the documented cases, packaging emerges as the strongest area for cross-market expansion, particularly in Asia and South America. While these examples point to broader international patterns, they should not be interpreted as representative market statistics for individual regions.



Nathan Safran, Vice President, Research at Alliance Insights, comments: "Convergence opens additional growth opportunities. Expansion alone, however, is not a strategy. What matters is where customer demand, economic potential and a company's own capabilities come together."

Automation, robotics, artificial intelligence and integrated workflows can support expansion into new applications. They connect processes, increase flexibility and help companies manage greater product variety and shorter runs economically. But technology alone does not create a viable business case. Turning technological capabilities into successful business opportunities depends on the interplay between market requirements, organisational readiness and existing expertise.

drupa insights connects markets, technology and industry practice

The Alliance Insights analysis of convergence is part of drupa insights, a platform that brings together international market and technology analysis with perspectives from industry practice. Topics range from automation, robotics and artificial intelligence to packaging, the changing requirements of print



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buyers and brand owners, and the increasing convergence of market segments.

Sabine Geldermann, Director drupa, Portfolio Print Technologies, says: "With drupa insights, we provide context for current industry developments and examine how they are affecting markets and business models."

As part of the LEARN cluster, drupa insights strengthens the continuous transfer of knowledge on the road to drupa 2028. The analysis on convergence and further expert contributions are available on the platform at www.drupa.com/insights. A brief registration is required to access the content. This also applies to visitors who are already registered for drupa.



The next drupa will take place from 9 to 17 May 2028 at the Düsseldorf Exhibition Centre. Further information on drupa can be found at www.drupa.com.

Press Team drupa

Christian Müller, Senior Manager MarCom (Press & PR)
Apostolos Hatzigiannidis, Manager MarCom (Operational Services)
Tel: +49 (0)211-4560 -435 /-544
MuellerC@messe-duesseldorf.de;
HatzigiannidisA@messe-duesseldorf.de

www.drupa.com