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## **New Products, New Services, New Ways to Engage**

A keen understanding of print applications can help shape the future of your business. A printed brochure, postcard, or catalog can cut through the clutter of e-mails, banner ads, and TV or radio commercials while enhancing the results of online efforts. Despite this, many businesses of all sizes still don't fully appreciate the value that digital print can deliver. The ability to print only what is needed when it is needed can save time as well as money, and this only scratches the surface of digital print's true potential!

### ***A New Understanding of Applications***

KeyPoint Intelligence's application forecast provides a glimpse into the changes that are occurring in various segments of our industry. Over the next three years, the following print applications are expected to see the most growth in terms of print volume:

1. Direct Mail
2. Books
3. Brochures

Due to ongoing advancements in digital print technology and the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, shorter runs are even more top-of-mind than they have ever been before. Now is the time to sit down with your customers and demonstrate how digital print can offer the flexibility they undoubtedly need after enduring the challenging business climate of the past two years.

### ***Focus on New, Not New, and Must Do!***

Those in the print industry would do well to focus on value-added services. This can result in substantial profit margins and revenue growth. By reframing your product portfolio and the value it delivers, you will no longer be forced to price-match your competitors.

Print-related value-added services can include:

- Bindery
- Finishing
- Mailing services
- Personalization

This leads to a question, though—if almost every print environment already offers these capabilities, then why would customers consider them to be value-added services? Ultimately, this points to the importance of properly educating your prospects and customers. Think about the last time someone handed you a business card. Did you notice the rounded corners and unique coating, or were you perhaps unimpressed by a lackluster appearance? Finishing the job elevates the power of print as well as the value of your brand.

### **Engage with Print**

Posters, flyers, newsletters, and postcards are all designed to create awareness. Their purpose is often to inform and to prompt people to take action. Brands of all sizes continue to seek new ideas for enhancing the customer experience. Unfortunately, even the most creative use of promotional print can fail to engage the reader. The good news is that QR codes can be an ideal way to capture and hold the attention of an intended audience.

Today's QR codes have undergone quite a few improvements since they were first introduced nearly 30 years ago. The key differences between then and now can be found in technology and technique. Today's smartphones are smarter than ever, and built-in readers make the content behind the QR code more assessable to the user. Much like today's mobile phones, QR codes have also elevated their functionality. Instead of directing a user to a static landing page or revealing simple contact information, they can provide coupons, enable the user to leave a review, or offer access to entire documents and menus. In short, they deliver convenience.

Best practices for using QR codes in today's market include:

1. Understanding the intended audience
2. Having clear objectives
3. Providing valuable incentives or helpful information

There are many ways to incorporate QR codes into print. A word of caution, though—QR codes are easy to generate, but they shouldn't be created just for the sake of it! It's important for the purpose of the code to be clear, well-defined, and relevant.

### **Final Thoughts**

Business development is a top priority for many firms, but it must also be approached as an ongoing process. The activities that are required to build a business command patience and dedication. In short, there are no shortcuts for accelerating growth; you must invest in the process. Start by taking inventory of your customers' needs. Next, explore the many options that are available to

increase the value of their printed communications. When you come to the table with new ideas and solutions, you can build a loyal customer following.

***Featured Author:***



## **Karen Kimerer – Keypoint Intelligence**

For some, working in the print industry doesn't sound very interesting. But, for Karen, it is a devotion she's been chasing for years. Her work centers on sales effectiveness. As an Associate Consultant with Keypoint Intelligence she coaches organizations of all sizes in the industry to get the most from their sales and marketing efforts. During her career Karen held a position on the Regional Board of Directors for Printing Industries of America and received accreditation by the American Management Association. She is formally trained in several sales disciplines, and proficient in Lean Six Sigma.