



## ***The Value of Great Print Suppliers***

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No matter what part of the nonprofit sector you're in, one of the most universal expense line items is "Print". Whether it's used for fundraising, event promotion, brochures, program guides or office stationery, the printed word is alive and well in our sector. It was clear to us in our work with leaders in the sector that print spending was definitely an area of opportunity for improved purchasing management.

### **Why 'Old-School' Print Marketing in a Digital Age?**

In a world filled with digital media, some people question the value of print marketing campaigns. While it might be easy to tag print as an 'old-school' or outmoded way to communicate, printing companies are responding with modern mediums that are more effective than ever in getting your message across. The best print suppliers also provide efficient ordering and tracking methods, design support and other value-added services. While there's no doubt we live in the age of digital, we find that the Print industry has stepped up its game to provide more value than ever.

### **Merge Print with Social Media for Broader Reach and Unified Messaging**

Working with marketing professionals in both the nonprofit and for-profit sectors, it's become clear that your communication campaigns don't need to separate print from social media; in fact, quite the opposite is true! The creation of a complementary print and digital campaign can allow your nonprofit or charity to reach a wider audience. What works for one recipient of your message might not work for another as individuals respond across a wide range of marketing mediums. In an age where 'one size does not fit all', some people prefer a tactile approach to receive a message while others love to live online. Integrating elements of your social media presence with print is possible by incorporating links to your website, email and your Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other digital accounts. Not only can you reach a greater audience if you use both print and digital, but a unified approach to your campaign can also greatly enhance its effectiveness.

### **Print is Trustworthy with Less Privacy Exposure**

Social media campaigns may be seen as intrusive from a privacy perspective, when it comes to tracking views and clicks. Due to its traditional nature, print can help your nonprofit or charity earn trust and credibility with your desired audience, all while maintaining private exposure to your organization.

### **Direct Mail Delivers: Personalization, Relevance, Targeted Audience**

While direct mail has declined in volume over the past several years, it is definitely not dead; did you know that in the past 10 years, while volume of direct mail went down, its overall percentage of all mail received went up? The return on investment of print remains strong especially if marketing materials are both personalized and relevant. Included in this equation is delivering a direct mail campaign to a

targeted audience. As with all best practices, be sure to do your homework and find out all that you can about your audience; craft your message and deliver it to those who will respond!

### **Visual and Tactile Triggers: Quality Products and Finishes**

Just as the digital world is changing, the print industry is evolving too. Fresh ideas and new finishes abound as do environmentally-friendly paper products. It is good practice to consider suppliers who are using state-of-the-art print technology coupled with inks and paper that will impress your audience, be consistent and achieve high visual impact.

### **Delivery vs Drop-In: Total Cost Best Practice**

In our recent publication titled '[Shop smart: The case for delivery over drop-in](#)', we discussed the value of delivery over drop-in when it comes to purchasing office supplies for nonprofits. The same rings true for print materials. Print suppliers that allow you to save time and money by ordering online or by phone/fax/email will allow you to be more productive and spend more time on the work and people that need you. You'll also be able to track your purchases, all essential to accounting for your overall costs.

### **Hands-On Support: Value for Service**

Print companies are refining how they do business and are under pressure to deliver value on their services. Look for print companies who have been around for a while and have had time to perfect their ability to serve customers. Count on them to help craft your message and leverage what they know to best deliver your nonprofit or charity's message.

### **A Helpful Resource**

During the fall season that is often a busy time for communications campaigns and conferences; nonprofits should consider using known and respected print suppliers who also offer great value for money. To help out, the Ontario Nonprofit Network Purchasing Program (ONNPP) recently conducted a rigorous sourcing process to select Preferred Suppliers for Print Materials based on a wide range of criteria including pricing, quality and value-added services (inquires can be directed to [onnpp@rtps.ca](mailto:onnpp@rtps.ca)).

Whether you need a simple re-order of business cards, postcards, brochures, banners etc. or you're looking to create a new campaign, a good print strategy that includes a strong supplier partner can be invaluable in having your message stand out from the crowd.

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### **About the RTPS and the ONNPP**

Round Table Procurement Services (RTPS) is the ONN's partner in the ONN Purchasing Program (ONNPP), an initiative designed to help drive savings and other improvements in how the sector spends money. Founded in 2003, RTPS is dedicated to helping non-profit organizations in Canada better manage their purchasing activities and improve the impact of every dollar spent. They offer a unique combination of technical expertise and non-profit experience that deliver proven results. Whether its reducing costs, managing suppliers, developing policy, driving efficiencies or navigating board or regulatory requirements, RTPS helps NPOs turn purchasing headaches into opportunities to improve. Learn more at [www.rtps.ca](http://www.rtps.ca) or email [info@rtps.ca](mailto:info@rtps.ca).

