

Digital transformation in the printing industry

By [Toby Wells](#)

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Digital transformation is the new buzzword in the technology industry, but what does it exactly mean and more specifically, what does it mean for the printing industry?



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Let's start by looking at the term 'Digital Transformation'. Digital transformation is the integration of digital technology into all areas of a business, fundamentally changing how you operate and deliver value to customers. It's also a cultural change that requires organisations to continually challenge the status quo, experiment, and get comfortable with failure.

In business, digitising usually involves turning paper-based information into digital information.

Business leaders are getting the message and prioritising their business accordingly. IDC forecasts that worldwide spending on technologies and services that enable digital transformation will reach \$1.97 trillion in 2022, per the (IDC) Worldwide Semi-annual Digital Transformation Spending Guide.

IDC predicts that digital transformation spending will grow steadily, achieving a five-year compound annual growth rate of 16.7% between 2017 and 2022. Business executives are starting to recognise that digital transformation is not a quick fix but rather a long-term investment

How does digital transformation then influence the printing industry, the one industry that relies on its customers still using paper, the one thing that is not digital?

The print industry has been feeling the force of the digital age for some time; information is shared and distributed online instead of printed on paper. Manufacturers now need to find new areas of innovation, all of this while trying to protect their core business – printing. The dilemma that they face is finding new growth areas for printing whilst trying to make their product still relevant in the digital age.

It is now crucial for manufacturers to connect to their customers in a meaningful way by creating services and products that leverage their heritage in print but also connect them with the digital world they do business in.

One of the ways that manufacturers can achieve this is to drive the digital transformation journey.

Paper remains a key element of the connected and collaborative office workplace and still plays crucial role in the business processes of many businesses.

However, paper bottlenecks can hamper business productivity and frustrate the client. This is where print dealers can connect the paper and digital worlds and develop stronger expertise in workflow solutions and services, such as smart multi-function devices (MFPs), which have evolved over the years to become sophisticated document processing devices.

This enables print dealers with the opportunity to maximise the value of their hardware offerings and combining it with software solutions.

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