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Abstract

Customized Communications: Web-to-Print

Report Fast Facts

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Abstract

This document is part of a series of strategic assessments that help print service providers understand the technology and market opportunity for every segment of Customized Communications. This document provides a definition of Web-to-Print, introduces the technology on the market today, discusses the needs of document owners, and outlines new revenue opportunities. It also provides examples of applications and strategies for identifying and selling Customized Communications in different market segments.

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Headquarters:
97 Libbey Industrial Parkway
Suite 300
Weymouth, MA 02189
United States
+1 781 616 2100
info@infotrends.com

Europe:
3rd Floor, Sceptre House
7-9 Castle Street
Luton, Bedfordshire
United Kingdom, LU1 3AJ
+44 1582 400120
euro.info@infotrends.com

Asia:
Hiroo Office Building
1-3-18 Hiroo, Shibuya-ku
Tokyo 150-0012
Japan
+81 3 5475 2663
info@infotrends.co.jp

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Web-to-Print Defined	4
The Market for Web-to-Print Software	5
Delivery Models.....	5
Licensed Delivery Defined.....	5
Hosted Delivery Defined.....	6
Business Models.....	7
Ad-Hoc Submission	7
Catalog Ordering	7
Templated Ordering.....	7
Job Submission	8
Upload Utility.....	8
Print Driver Based.....	8
Common Features	9
Benefits for the Print Service Provider	9
Web-to-Print Benefits for Document Owners	9
Campaign Execution	10
The Store Front.....	11
Creating the Storefront	11
The Customer Experience.....	11
Processing the Order.....	12
Service Provider Required Skills	12
Target Markets	14
Challenges & Solutions for the Print Service Provider	15
Commercial Printing Environment.....	15
Quick Printing Environment.....	15
In-Plant/CRD Environment	16
Conclusion	17

List of Figures

Figure 1: Cost Savings from E-Business Systems for the Corporate Document Owner	3
Figure 2: Benefits of e-Enablement for the Print Service Provider.....	4
Figure 3: Comparison of Web-to-print Delivery Models	6
Figure 4: Typical Structure of Web-to-print Execution.....	10
Figure 5: The Store Front	12
Figure 6: Print Service Provider Requirements for Licensed and Hosted Web-to-Print Solutions	13

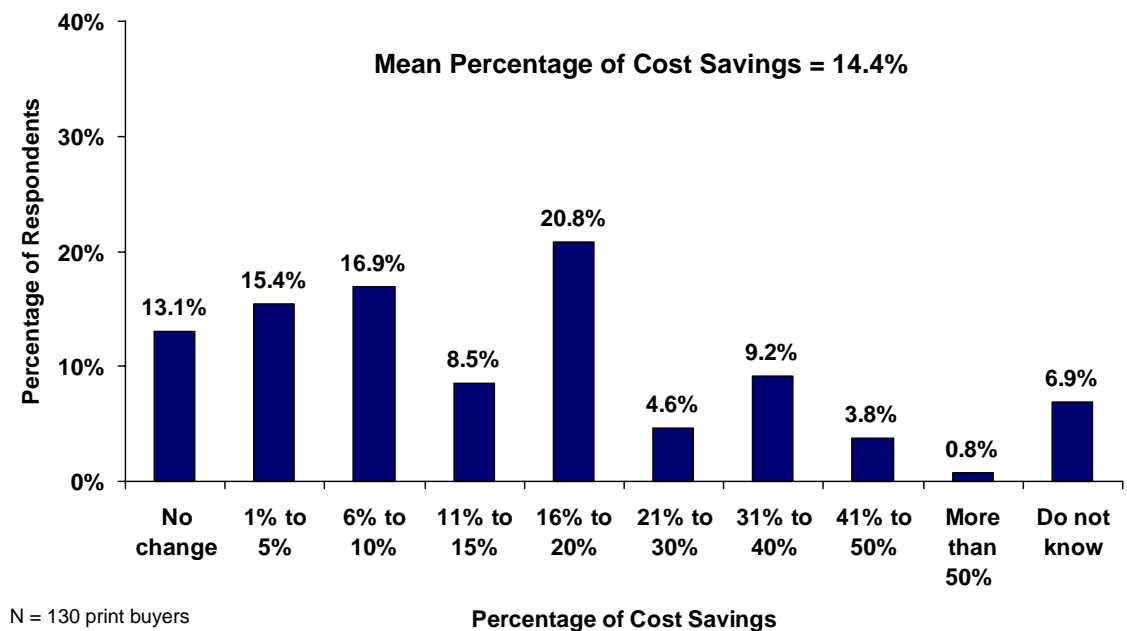
Introduction

This document provides a definition of Web-to-print and identifies the market opportunity these solutions present. It discusses the needs of document owners and marketing professionals for more efficient and effective business communications, translating those needs into business opportunities for the print service provider. It also identifies the features and functionality inherent in Web-to-print solutions and the benefits that functionality brings to a business and its customers.

Web-to-print was born out of the dot-com boom of the 1990s and began as an adjunct to a print service provider’s process for file submission using the (then) new capabilities offered by the Internet. Today, Web-to-print has transformed into a robust solution that encompasses much more than job submission. It has become an integral element of the workflow automation that is increasingly being sought by print service providers and their customers alike. Buyers and sellers of print are leveraging these systems to increase automation, improve operational efficiency, improve brand management, take cost and time out of the print procurement process, and enhance the quality and currency of printed materials. These solutions have expanded to encompass a broader print e-business or multi-channel Web services paradigm.

In a recent InfoTrends study entitled *e-Enablement: The Future of Graphic Communications*, corporate buyers reported increased efficiencies as a result of e-enabled print procurement that equate to a mean savings of 14.4%.

Figure 1: Cost Savings from E-Business Systems for the Corporate Document Owner



Print service providers also see several benefits as a result of e-enablement. The same InfoTrends study found that on average, respondents have seen an 8.1% increase in revenue directly attributable to the implementation of print e-business services. This is significant, considering that the NAPL (National

Association for Printing Leadership) reports that printing industry sales are only growing at the rate of 3.1%, with other sources reporting an even slower growth rate.

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