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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 hardware and software suppliers understand the technology and market opportunity for every segment of Customized Communications. This document provides a definition of Web-to-Print and explains the target markets for suppliers that are offering this technology. It also provides examples of applications and strategies for identifying and selling Customized Communications in different market segments.

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## 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 the businesses of print service providers and their customers to effectively sell these solutions.

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. Print buyers and sellers 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.

## Target Markets

A print service provider that is in the process of purchasing a digital press and is interested in a solution that will assist with digital business development may be an ideal fit for a Web-to-print solution. Print service providers that already have digital production capabilities and are looking to add Web-to-print to the mix can also be good candidates.

Although Web-to-print solutions are typically used hand-in-hand with a digital press, it is not necessary to have digital production capabilities to deploy Web-to-print. Many offset printers use Web-to-print as a fulfillment tool. These systems offer many benefits: order automation and administration, the ability to establish an online presence and expand market reach, and facilitation of multi-channel marketing campaigns for corporate users.

As an entrée, suppliers can leverage these attributes when engaging a non-digital shop in an effort to eventually sell them a digital production press and other customized communications solutions. Chances are that end-customers, who frequently purchase print and other services through their Web-to-print storefronts, will eventually demand the benefits of print on-demand (faster turnarounds and variable data capability that digital printing ultimately affords).

Primary candidates for a Web-to-print solution include:

- Commercial Printers
- Quick Printers
- In-Plant Printers

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