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GRAPHIC DESIGN & PRINT FOR YOUR BUSINESS

LET'S GET IT RIGHT

Free Support for Solopreneurs Small Businesses and Organisations

Tom Goymour

designed **4print**

Who is this for?

It's good that you are reading this, whether you are a solopreneur single business owner, a larger established business or an organisation, I'm sure you will find this is of some value to you.

I'm guessing that as you are reading this you may already have seen the light, or at least got a glimpse of it! Allow me to explain.

Why I have written this guide

There is a lack of understanding of how to harness the power of design and printed materials, a lot of square pegs are being forced into round holes.

How graphic design and print requirements can work effectively in today's economic landscape affects almost everyone at some level.

Dove-tailing this into the digital world that surrounds us is something I believe I can help you with, so I have put this guide together to explain how.

This is a short read, but an important one.

Who Am I?

I'm Tom Goymour, and I have been involved with design, print and graphics at some level or other for more than 40 years. I have seen a lot of things come and go, and I know about the things that stick around – the pillars of the process that we can hang our hats on.

What I have learned is that everyone has different needs. Right now our ability to adapt is as crucial as it has ever been. Strategies are changing faster than we can keep up with, what worked six months ago may well not work for you right now. The world of design and print is no different. Knowledge is key.
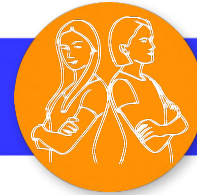
What You Will Learn

- **Why no two businesses are the same**
- **How Design and Print works**
- **The Problem**
- **The Solution**
- **How You Can Benefit**
- **The Next Steps**

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Why No Two Businesses Are The Same

Traditionally, like-minded trades shared a lot of similarities in the way they worked and competition would often form mainly around price and service. Unless you were in an industry where a specialism was needed and you were set up to serve those particular clients, being different was not the thing. But those times are no more. Now, everybody wants to be spoon-fed with everything all at once and competition between small businesses has increased. I am generalising and exaggerating a little, but the point is …

You have got to be different

And that difference needs to come from you – what you do best, in which areas can you help your customers or clients just that little bit more than the next person. To do this you need to address each part of your business and decide whether it is effective. Do you really need it? Is there something missing that you should have?

– Everyone has clients or customers but not everyone needs a CRM system. *(Customer Relationship Management)*

– All businesses need to receive money but not every business needs a card payment processing machine.

In terms of helping you make the right basic decisions about your print and design requirements …

• Everybody will need some printed material but not everyone is going to need flyers or brochures just because they sound like a great idea!

People make this particular mistake quite often, if you haven't done it yourself you will probably know of someone who had the bright idea of having 5000 flyers printed and then spent the next six months telling people what a waste of money they were!

I have even on occasions reluctantly printed for clients whom I have advised NOT to order the particular thing they had in mind because there were better options. *(There are always some people who think they know best).*

As small businesses, our differences are our strengths. While there is a framework of things you must get right, there are a whole load of other things that you need to choose from very carefully.

How Design and Print Works
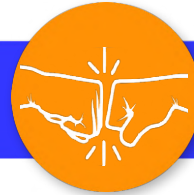
Visual impact is key. First impressions really do count … every time!

Digital Posters

Business Cards

Stitched Books

Sticker Sheets

Successful use of design and printed materials brings results. She has no drawers full of hundreds of letterheads that are never going to get used, and she doesn't pay out to have thousands of leaflets delivered on a regular basis. Just clean simple effective well-designed products that are right for her business are all that is needed.

Outdoor Banners

A-frames

Roller Banners

If you need flyers then I can tell you how best to use them and what is the most cost-effective approach. If printing a brochure is a large expense then maybe a digital product with impactful design is going to be more effective.

I can help you develop the right promotional and functional products for your business so that you can make the right connections with the right clients at the right time.

Roller Banners

Digital Posters

Flyers

A-frames

Stitched Books

Leaflets

The Problem

You know how it works. If you are honest with yourself I'll bet you know, because we are all guilty of making this one mistake at some point in our lives:

We do what we want rather than what we need to happen

It's human nature, but it gets in the way and it is very difficult to break the habit when we are emotionally attached to something. Most people approach their design and print needs in exactly this way – they design, order and print what they want – what they are used to – what the business across the road is doing. I was no different, I have stuck with things, changed things, tried new things because I liked the sound of them – we all do it. Generally speaking, when something isn't working, changing it is what we have been taught to do. Often, bringing about a change is the only real obvious positive option.

But here's the problem…

Change *doesn't* always lead to better, and in the world of print and graphic design, it can become a very subjective point. But one thing is clear, there has never been a time like the present when it has been so difficult to stand back and pick out what really matters and what doesn't. This is because there are so many trends, so many choices available, so many differing opinions, and to be quite honest, some of it just adds up to bad advice.

Traditionally, design and print do not come cheaply, so it stands to reason that money spent on the serviceit provides needs careful consideration. There is now a huge mix of organisations doing all sorts of different things with their design and print, some of it for the better, some not so. I see it all the time.

So the problem really is ignorance. Education and guidance are now needed to show at an individual level how to make stuff work effectively for you and how it can help to differentiate you from the next person and silently grow your brand. This matters.

One size does not fit all

So wouldn't it be good to know that all sizes can be catered for, without any additional effort or expense, once you understand how?

This is what a poorly managed design and print strategy looks like when the parts are not working correctly

Lack of Professional Design Expertise:
- **Problem:** Relying on amateur or non-specialized design services.
- **Impact:** Poorly executed designs that fail to communicate the brand effectively, resulting in a lack of credibility and trust.

Failure to Adapt to Changing Consumer Behavior:
- **Problem:** Sticking to traditional print methods without considering evolving consumer preferences.
- **Impact:** Missing opportunities to engage with a wider audience and losing relevance in a rapidly changing market.

Overlooking Emotional Resonance:
- **Problem:** Prioritizing information over emotional appeal in print materials.
- **Impact:** Failure to establish a meaningful connection with the audience, resulting in reduced brand loyalty.

Mismatched Design and Audience Perception:
- **Problem:** Using colours and design elements based on personal preferences rather than understanding the target audience.
- **Impact:** Low response rates and engagement due to a misalignment with the preferences and expectations of potential clients.

Inadequate Integration of Print and Digital Strategies:
- **Problem:** Treating print and digital design as separate entities.
- **Impact:** Inconsistent brand messaging and a fragmented customer experience, leading to a loss of trust and recognition.

Lack of Visual Consistency Across Platforms:
- **Problem:** Neglecting the importance of a cohesive visual identity across both print and digital platforms.
- **Impact:** Confusion among the audience, leading to a diluted brand image and reduced recognition.

Ignoring Data and Metrics:
- **Problem**: Neglecting to track the performance of print materials.
- **Impact:** Inability to measure the effectiveness of campaigns and make data-driven improvements, leading to wasted resources.

Underestimating the Power of Tangibility:
- **Problem**: Focusing solely on digital marketing and overlooking the tangible impact of print materials.
- **Impact:** Missing out on opportunities to create a lasting impression and a more personal connection with the audience.

Good Design is The Most Critical Part

It should always be the starting point. Okay, I get that not every element of design needs to be treated with the same attention to meet its particular requirement, but what I mean by 'good' is that it does the job as adequately as is required, and so often I see elements of design that don't. Some things will need a lot more attention than others to achieve their desired outcome, but it is usually an easy fix, and it matters, always.

An extreme example to make the point; an invitation designed using a script font… all in capitals because the creator likes the script style and wanted it to stand out, and so chose capitals. Yuck! It never works and will never make a good impression however much its creator may have liked it themselves.

Getting the basics of your design right is more important than getting the printing of your design perfect

This is another hugely overlooked point, and if you are in any doubt about this think about some real-life examples.

Just imagine for a minute any instantly recognisable logo from any key big brand – think sports manufacturers, supermarket chains, fast food franchises … whatever comes to mind. What do you remember? What do you see in your mind's eye?

You see the important details of the design imprinted on your memory. You take in the colours but I bet you can't say where they fall on any technical colour scale. I'm not saying that these logos exist around and about with poorly produced colours, (although sometimes they do), what I am saying is that it is the contents of the design that makes the biggest impression and is what it will be remembered for. Colours are important, but in this example scenario exact colours don't matter, because, you know what … nobody notices any slight differences. Fashions for colours come and go, but I kid you not, whatever your personal preferences are, certain combinations always work best for the human brain to interpret the message.

The secret is hitting the sweet spot for as many of things as you can and getting the priorities of your design right before you turn it into anything.

Good design costs money but so does poor design. The trick is to know which bits are worth paying the money for and which bits you can do yourself.

The Solution

I'm not one for catchphrases and clichés but to answer this I point you to a 'law of life' that is an extremely good barometer at any level for almost anything.

You have quite likely heard of the 80/20 rule?

It means broadly speaking that 20% of your efforts are going to produce 80% of your results and, visa versa. We can apply this to almost anything, it's not an exact science but it certainly rings true for a lot of areas of business. For our purposes, I am going to say that 20% of your design and print requirements are likely to achieve 80% of your desired outcomes and that as much as 80% of it will only have a 20% effect. While this might not be easily measurable, you will see this pattern emerge over time. Getting this right matters for everything that you put in front of other people.

Here is an example; Let's say you required five items for your business, four of them were basic stationery with your brand logo and the fifth one was a new catalogue for which you had the concept but no design ready. If you brought those five items to me, do you think I would give them all the same time allocation and charge you the same for each? Or might I possibly need to spend as much as 80% of the time on getting your Catalogue to the standard it needs to be to have anything like the impact you'd hoped?

Of course, the other items are just as important, but in the hands of a professional, they are not so difficult to execute and wouldn't take as much time, (assuming you already had the logo designed).

Getting it Right

Getting your ship in order is hard. There is never time to do all the silent little bits and pieces that don't scream for your attention. It is also hard to know what should come first … often it's a chicken or the egg situation. If you decide you are not happy with the design of something months after it has been printed, advertised or used at any level, then it becomes a bit of a problem. The answer can't always be to just start again.

The answer is to prioritise. You will be able to do this far better when you fully understand the subject and know when the task is something you can do yourself or when to get help and NOT attempt it yourself or leave it in the hands of someone else who is as equally in the dark about the subject.

But there is another part of this that you need to consider; that grey area in the middle – the things that you are quite capable of doing but they are going to eat up your time. There is one simple rule to apply here … but people don't do it often enough … simply ask yourself:

Is this task worth my time?

Take the trouble to try and answer this question every time you have something you need to get done that you *could* pay for but also could do yourself. When I am overrun with work I call on help. At slack times I have attempted to do things myself to save money, with differing results. The great thing is you learn from it, and that is an important plus.

I needed some flyers designed for my pet food wholesale business. I spent an hour or two trying myself but it was so much better when I got professional help. I was even able to get my logo redesigned and some neighbourhood cards printed at the same time for much less than I had expected.

LM. Small pet food business owner

I wasn't sure where to go when I finished writing my book. Finding somewhere that would complete the entire print and publishing service at a price I could afford was a blessing. I will be heading back with the next book as soon as it is finished.

BB. Solopreneur author

I was pleasantly surprised to get a choice of designs for my business cards and even though I requested some alterations, have them arrive at my door just three days later! I'm not even based in the same part of the country but will be coming back here for my next job.

AB. Independent motor vehicle specialist

We get our annual show schedules done every year like clockwork. It's always a fiddly job that runs to a tight deadline but the results are fantastic every time, and without breaking the bank.

LB. Horticultural Society Show Secretary

Real examples, names changed to preserve annonimity

Getting your priorities right will save you money over time. Pay for the things you need and educate yourself to accomplish what you can yourself.

When you reach this sweet spot, doors start to open.

A successful design and print strategy will look like this when all areas can produce a successful outcome that leads to positive impact

Ensuring a Professional Level of Design Throughout:
- **Successful Outcome:** Acquire the knowledge necessary to know when to seek specialized design services.
- **Impact:** Well executed design will communicate the brand effectively, resulting in increased credibility and trust.

Ability to Adapt to Changing Consumer Behaviour:
- **Successful Outcome:** Acquire knowledge of the most currently evolving consumer preferences and be ready to expand or change some of the more traditional methods/products used for promotion
- **Impact:** Seizing opportunities to engage with an everchanging wider audience gives any business far more relevance.

Forging A Strong Emotional Resonance:
- **Successful Outcome:** Knowing what aspects of design to use where and when in printed material is key. Know when to seek professional advice
- **Impact:** Can quickly establish a meaningful connection with your audience, resulting in a growth of trust and brand loyalty.

Design Matched to Audience Perception:
- **Successful Outcome:** Using colours and design elements based on proven human perception habits (data). Get to know and understand your target audience.
- **Impact:** Almost always increased response rates and engagement due to a careful alignment design function with potential client expectations

Clear Integration of Print and Digital Strategies:
- **Successful Outcome:** Treat print and digital design as one entity
- **Impact:** Consistent 'silent' growth of brand imparted by a professional presentation of materials which gains trust and recognition over time.

Visual Consistency Across Platforms:
- **Successful Outcome:** Use of a cohesive visual identity across both print and digital platforms.
- **Impact:** Clarity. Silent brand growth, trust and recognition.

Using Data and Metrics:
- **Successful Outcome:** Track the performance of print materials.
- **Impact:** Measuring the effectiveness of campaigns and making data-driven improvements will save marketing time in the long run

Harnessing the Power of Tangibility:
- **Successful Outcome:** Use knowledge gained to apply focus on the correct physical marketing materials for your specific requirements.
- **Impact:** Create lasting impressions and make more personal connections with the audience from the opportunities that arise.

How You Can Benefit

What I do is try and make it as easy and cost-effective as possible for you to get stuff done:

- This might mean managing your entire project from start to finish

- This might mean just providing quality print at a competitive price

- This might be purely providing a design service

- This might apply to a detailed project with a healthy production budget

- This might mean helping you get a very simple task done quickly

- This might just mean having a chat about the seed of an idea you have

Whatever it takes … the point is, one size doesn't fit all.

What All This Means For You

- **HASSLE-FREE PRINT AND DESIGN – A partnering printer you can form a relationship with. Design, print and support services all in one place ensuring nothing goes wrong**

- **SAVES YOU MONEY – Discounted rates on virtually everything and with some free products too**

- **SAVES YOU TIME – by giving the right advice and support services**

- **FREE SUPPORT – Free Discovery call, free resources and support that grows with you**

- **MORE CUSTOMERS OR CLIENTS – Strengthened brand identity using well-aligned products will attract more of your ideal clients**

The Next Steps

What Can You Do Right Now?

Because everyone's needs are different, the first stage is to determine where you are right now. You can do this by your own means or you can get help.

There are resources on the website to help with this, or we can have a chat to quickly establish your main goals.

- Book a free Discovery call. It's quick and easy to do over Zoom

Book A Discovery Call

At Designed4Print I offer 4 service levels, each one designed to fit a particular business profile. All plans are flexible and the Starter level is free.

What's inside?

STARTER

- By subscribing you can get a 20% discount on your order (as long as it's under £500). You also get a free discovery call where I will offer help and support for any area of print and design. You can also download the resources from the site knowledge base.

SOLO   SMALL BUSINESS   PREMIUM

By taking a paid plan you get more benefits. The contents are broadly the same for each plan, with the difference from the free plan being the discount which is permanent. Which plan is right for you will depend on how much print or design work you need and what budget you have for it.

- Discovery call and one to one follow on calls when needed
- 20% Discount on all print purchases
- 40% Discount on all Graphic Design purchases
- Free regular products supplied. These vary, you can choose

Just some examples: Neighbourhood cards | Digital Brochure | Social Media Ad design

Click on the buttons to get the full plan details

So let's recap

Whatever point you are presently at you know the problem. You see the things that get in the way stopping you from making the progress you deserve.

It can change, and the great thing is it's not about a huge price tag. You're only going to pay out money if it's worth your while and mine!

Take your time to think this through, then get in touch, you have nothing to lose, I won't waste your time or mine if I can see it isn't something you need.

All the precise details are on the website. The links are all right here.

www.designed4printdirect.com

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