

## [INTRODUCTION]

**[0:00:03] MP:** Are you fed up that all your conversations with customers seem to focus around price? Struggling to stand out from the competition? Or maybe you're just frustrated, at trying to put together a realistic sales plan or make the most of social media? I'm Matthew Parker, the Champion of Print, and I help printing companies with all these sorts of issues. What makes me different is that I've been sold to by over 1400 different printing companies, so I know what works and I know what doesn't. Visit [www.profitableprintrelationships.com](http://www.profitableprintrelationships.com) to find out more and download free resources.

## [INTERVIEW]

**[0:00:45] DC:** Hey, everybody. Welcome to Podcast from the Printerverse. This is Deborah Corn, your Intergalactic Ambassador. More specifically, we are here with the UKvUSA Podcast Series, which means on the other end of this microphone, Matthew Parker.

**[0:01:04] MP:** Hello, Deborah Corn. How are you today? Have you got your sparring gloves on?

**[0:01:09] DC:** I do, but I'm not really sure this is an episode about fighting, but we shall see, depending upon what your suggestions are.

**[0:01:16] MP:** It's a shame really, because I've actually been going to the gym, recently. I've been doing some boxing practice. I'm all ready for the fighting, but I think this one is more collaborative. I agree. But let's see what we have to say.

**[0:01:27] DC:** That's okay. You build up your muscles and I will build up my brain cells and we'll see who wins an argument. No problem. Okay, so our topic today is things that we believe printers should start if they haven't already thinking about for 2024. We each wrote down two thoughts on that and we don't know each other's thoughts on it. Matthew led the conversation last time, so I'm going to lead at this time and I'm going to start off with what I believe will be the biggest significant moment in 2024, which is the return of drupa.

Now, I understand that it's not something that everybody goes to, however, to paying attention to all the press releases and all of the news coming from the manufacturers and the technology that they're going to launch, and paying attention through drupa to see what was introduced into the marketplace and learn about the direction that the printing industry, the global print industry is heading is super important for everybody else who will eventually trickle down to.

It reminds me of the scene in *The Devil Wears Prada*, where the assistant is laughing because it's just a blue sweater. Meryl Streep goes on to this entire monologue about how the color of this sweater was developed after years by people, and finally it trickles down to the two-for-one sale that she got her knockoff, not a designer sweater, but the same color, and that's how drupa works. Eventually, if you're there, if you're part of it, then you have a slight advantage because you can hear directly from people how this is all going to affect the world of print and the abilities of a print shop, the optimizations of a print shop, and all of that.

Then everybody else, eventually it's going to make it to your doorstep. That's my first one, Matthew, put drupa on your radar. If you can get there, get there. There hasn't been one since 2016. The manufacturers are certainly going to introduce new technology at the show. I think that paying attention to it will help everybody in the printing industry formulate their best plans for how they should move forward with their business. Thoughts?

**[0:04:10] MP:** This is really interesting, Deborah. So, first of all, I absolutely think the industry should be looking at drupa this year and thinking about drupa and seeing how it fits into the evolution of the printing industry. I also agree that whenever press releases are put out about new technology and inevitably people are waiting until drupa, so they've got something to try and make it worthwhile for them, they are going to put out a whole load about that time.

Yeah. I totally agree with about those points. It was really interesting, because I was at a much smaller networking event yesterday, and I was having a really interesting discussion with someone who I think is a really key thinker in the printing industry about whether this group would be the last one or the one after that would be the last one. There's a lot of thoughts I think in Europe that drupa is becoming less relevant, and the reason for that is that I think a lot of companies are trying to think long and hard about where to put their marketing budget.

Is it best spent in one big bang where a lot of people trail around the hall getting grumpy at all the mileage they've got to put in and all the German sausages they have to eat, or are they better off having a series of smaller more targeted events at key contacts for them? I think that the market is going to go down that way. Drupa is such a massive investment, not just in terms of cost, but in terms of time and effort, that when there's a drupa year your marketing effort goes on drupa, and everything else falls by the wayside. I don't think that's a good thing. Since the pandemic, drupa has I think desperately been trying to make itself still relevant, and sometimes coming across a little too desperate for that.

**[0:06:08] DC:** Is FESPA trying to make itself stay relevant? Is PRINTING United trying to make itself Print China? I'm just wondering why are you picking on drupa and not the other traders?

**[0:06:18] MP:** Okay. So, I can't comment on PRINTING United, the last time I went to a big print show in America, I was fairly shocked at how small it was.

**[0:06:25] DC:** It's true.

**[0:06:26] MP:** Yeah. FESPA, I think, has its own special community, which is very much a networking event as much as –

**[0:06:31] DC:** So, they're special. Okay.

**[0:06:35] MP:** Print China, I've never been to, so I can't comment.

**[0:06:37] DC:** I'm just saying it's not the only large event that manufactures invested.

**[0:06:42] MP:** But drupa is, and you may correct me on Print China, but other than that, I think drupa is by some measure the largest by quite a long way.

**[0:06:50] DC:** It is.

**[0:06:50] MP:** I think that's the issue.

**[0:06:52] DC:** Yes, as far as I'm aware, drupa is the largest printing event.

**[0:06:58] MP:** To go to drupa is a massive effort to try and get some of the passing traffic, to go to some of FESPA is much less of an investment in time and effort, I think, and you're going to get more of the audience there. That's why I'm saying smaller and more specialized –

**[0:07:13] DC:** Okay. But FESPA is dedicated to wide format. I mean, I wasn't really trying to make the case about the topics of events, right? Because if we did, then FESPA actually fits into what you're saying, because it's dedicated subject matter, where drupa and Print China and other events around the world of significant size have everything in there, or they're trying to have everything in there. I mean, in infographic, in Mexico, and things like that. Okay, did you want to say anything else about that?

**[0:07:42] MP:** I've got one last point, so then I'll shut up about drupa.

**[0:07:46] DC:** You don't have to shut up about it, but I would like to comment on what you said.

**[0:07:51] MP:** Okay, no, that's fine. The final thing I wanted to say is that we've seen that Xerox have pulled out of drupa. There seems to be maybe a few question marks over exactly who will –β is anyone else going to drop out or not? Maybe not. It's an interesting one to watch. I think for me, I will be watching with interest from the sidelines, hoping that it's a great success, because we want the printing industry to succeed and to be good forums, but I'll be watching with interest to see what effect it has on the industry going forward.

**[0:08:26] DC:** There have been several years since the pandemic, as we know. Some of the manufacturers are not doing as well as they were before the pandemic. Some of them, like Xerox, if you look in the news, have been going through massive financial issues with people trying to take over their company or sell the company. They haven't invested in new technology, right, in the research and development. Making the correlation that drupa is no longer relevant because a couple of companies who are in a flux moment about what they're going to do about the future and don't have something new to show at the show. I don't think is a fair correlation.

To me, it's more about those companies saying, is it worth this investment to go and show something that everybody has seen or can see at smaller events or in different ways? Should we hold on to that cash for right now, until we have something to announce? I don't think that that is necessarily a testament to the value of participating with drupa as much as it is that companies are getting smarter about, let's take the PR hit that we're not going, but I haven't seen any announcements from anybody claiming that the reason that they're not exhibiting at drupa, is because drupa is not a valuable show.

I understand why that could be connected in some way to people's minds. I just don't believe that to be the case. Of course, I want to disclaim right now, I have no insider information, even though I work with drupa, they do not talk to me about anything like this. I'm just making like that Occam's razor, like what's the most logical conclusion here? I believe that smaller companies have not recovered. There are plenty of companies who have not recovered. They don't have the money, as you said, to get on that world stage, but that's the whole point. You've got to pay to play.

I do agree that overall, looking at the entire industry, looking at all the shows, not singling out drupa. They had a long time to evolve, and they did not evolve. They went back to their same model. You buy a booth, and you hope people come into it. We can point fingers at everybody about why somebody might go to a booth or might not visit a booth, or whose responsibility is it to get people into those booths, but the most important thing is that they still have an aversion to bringing those trade shows outside of where they're located, because they just want bodies on the floor.

In that sense, looking again across the entire industry, I was extremely disappointed when the shows came back, and they just basically took 2019 and replanted it in 2023, and thought that everything was going to be wonderful again. Unless you have anything else to add to that, let's move on to our next topic. Are you good?

**[0:12:11] MP:** I'm good.

**[0:12:13] DC:** Okay, thank you. I appreciate what you're saying. I hope that everybody out there, just do your own research and make your own decisions about why you think people may

or may not be going to something, why they may or may not be writing posts or whatever about these topics, and just do your own research. Okay, when we come back, Matthew's going to give us his first point.

[MESSAGE]

**[0:12:39] DC:** News from the Printerverse delivers topical sales and marketing insight, along with plenty of Printspiration one time a month to inboxes everywhere. Our contributors cover the industry and the future of print media and marketing with strategy for strengthening your customer relationships, better targeting of your prospects, and practical advice for helping your business grow. Printspiration is just a click away. Subscribe to news from the Printerverse at [printmediacentr.com](http://printmediacentr.com). Print long and prosper.

[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

**[0:13:14] DC:** Welcome back everybody. Okay, Matthew, first thing that printers should be thinking about for 2024. Go.

**[0:13:20] MP:** Okay. So, I've got two things that I want to talk about, and neither of them initially appear to be directly to do with the printing industry. My first one is single-use. I think this is going to become a big topic in 2020.

**[0:13:37] DC:** I love that.

**[0:13:39] MP:** It's already been a massive issue for the plastic industry quite correctly. Yeah, we need to stop having all this single-use plastic floating around the oceans. I think it's going to get wider than that, because actually, if we're going to reduce our landfill if we're going to reduce our carbon emissions, we need to think back to reduce, reuse, recycle. Now, paper is far more recyclable than plastic, but we still need to get to the fact that we need to reduce, and we need to reuse before we even think about the recycling. The main way to do that is to reduce single-use items.

I think this poses some interesting challenges and some interesting opportunities for the print industry. If I was a printer in 2024, I'd be doing a couple of things. I'd be trying to reposition my business to start reducing the amount of single-use prints that I produce. I'd be trying to move into areas where I feel that print has got a longer life span. So, out-of-door drop flyers, for instance, into books, brochures, I'm just looking at commercial print now where things are going to hang around a bit longer.

I'd also be looking at developing products that were traditionally single-use that can be more reused. If I'm in packaging, for instance. Let's stop having flimsy single-use envelopes. Let's start developing items, which maybe costs a bit more to begin with, but actually are going to last for several uses rather than just being chucked in the bin. Deborah, what do you think about that?

**[0:15:29] DC:** I think that that's actually a really interesting topic that printers should think about. I have a couple of questions if you don't mind. First of all, what do you mean by door-drop flyers? Let's just start – we don't say that here.

**[0:15:43] MP:** Okay. So, for example, and I don't know if it's the same in the US, because you've got slightly different laws over access to your letterboxes, but in the UK, there are regular deliveries for instance, from your local supermarket with the latest special offers that they're running.

**[0:15:59] DC:** Okay.

**[0:15:59] MP:** It's a single – think of it like a magazine, but it goes through everyone's door and it's maybe an eight-page or five.

**[0:16:06] DC:** Okay. So, do they put it in a bag and like hang it on your doorknob or they stick it in your mailbox –

**[0:16:10] MP:** They stick it in your mailbox because you're allowed to do that. Yeah.

**[0:16:13] DC:** Okay. So, it's like, I mean, unfortunately, we would probably call it junk mail here, not marketing mail. I always say marketing mail is the right message at the right time to the right person. If it's not that, then it is junk mail, because it's not valuable to anybody. Okay.

**[0:16:27] MP:** I'll say junk mail. That's fine.

**[0:16:29] DC:** Yeah. I just wanted to clarify what that was before I go back. Here's a question for you. Putting aside the people who don't have anything to do with creating anything that uses plastic, unless of course, they're using embellishments and things of that nature that rely on some of those materials to adhes, is that –

**[0:16:50] MP:** You've just developed a new word, but I get what you mean.

**[0:16:50] DC:** Okay. Let's stick to it.

**[0:16:54] MP:** Very good. Adhes. Let's stick to it.

**[0:16:57] DC:** Yes. Okay. Here's my question for you. If I send a postcard, a direct mail piece to somebody's house and it has a QR code to continue their journey somewhere else, is that a single-use item if I'm doing two things with it?

**[0:17:17] MP:** It's a very good question. I don't have an answer for that. I think the definition of single-use is going to develop as we go on. We'll start with junk mail and get rid of that. Whereas a targeted marketing piece is going to have less environmental impact because it's going to be less of them. Rather than sending a piece of junk mail to everyone in the neighborhoods, you're going to send it to just a few people you think are the right prospects for you.

Let's start with the big wins first. Moving on from there, inevitably, I think we're going to have to accept that for the moment. There is going to be some single use, but we should be looking at some big wins. I also think that some of those areas will become more digital because they have a lesser carbon footprint. Let's be clear about this. The difference in carbon footprint is not as big as you'd think. A digital has a carbon footprint. You can't go, "Oh, well, we'll get rid of all of



our carbon output by going digital.” But most of the examples I've seen show that digital does have a lower carbon footprint than print.

I mean, we'll go to single-use digital. I'm sure that there will be questions around that as well. Let's not keep digital out of the question. Let's start there for instance with video promos where you get those video postcards and things like that. They're a massive environmental resource that we should be stopping doing. Does that answer your question enough?

**[0:18:48] DC:** It does. I mean, I don't disagree with you, but I think we just need to add a couple caveats here. First, Europe is way more focused on this than the United States at the moment. There are certain countries in Europe that you can't even like, you can't get a plastic bag. Try it. They don't even have them. There are no single-use things. So, you have to bring your bottles back and they wash them and they take the labels off and they put them back in the system. However, that doesn't mean it's not coming here, just like GDPR, you guys started that now you're ruining our lives with it.

There are certain states in the United States that have taken this on very seriously, California, Colorado or two, for example, but there are many more. There are laws coming. They're coming. They're not here yet. They're trying to work it out because in the United States, it's a little different. We have 50 states that operate as like 50 separate things that report into the big corporation of the national government. We have more moving parts to figure out. One state could have different laws than the other. It's a logistical nightmare in the United States, more so than any people don't want to do it. It's we don't know how. Does things go into Colorado have to have certain disclaimers, only certain ways, things on shelves we know are going to be affected and so on, and so forth.

The other thing I want to say about just putting this in perspective is that this is also a very personal topic for you. I mean, starting with you would not speak unless there was a carbon offset of your plane travel, things like that. I just wanted to point that out, just like, I actually should have pointed out that I'm working with drupa, but I think everybody knows that, but that's because I love drupa. I'm not their spokesperson. I am their ambassador. That was I guess it matters, but I was their ambassador whether I was working with them or not. I just wanted to

say that. But yes, say whatever you want about that, and then we'll move on to our last two topics.

**[0:20:56] MP:** Two things. Yes, it's very close to my heart, but I've been speaking to a number of big print buyers in the UK. It's now getting to the point where carbon footprint is getting to be more of an issue than price. This isn't just me hoping that if I shout out on our podcast that people are going to start doing what I want them to do. This is being driven by the brands. That's being driven by public, yeah, by the users wanting this.

**[0:21:32] DC:** In Europe.

**[0:21:34] MP:** It's coming in the US, as well.

**[0:21:35] DC:** I know it is, but I just want to say you pay extra close attention to it, because it matters to you, just like I pay extra close attention to everything with drupa because it matters to me. I just want to give people a fair assessment of where our positions, so they can make their own decisions about why we're saying the things that we're saying. That's it.

**[0:21:57] MP:** Coming back on the different laws in the US states. I think what's going to happen is that globally the brands are going to have to have the right appeal to large amounts of people. For that reason, they are probably going to beat the laws of some of the states in terms of bringing in environmentally friendly products, single-use because it may be fine in certain states to have single-use and do all the things that I wouldn't like people to do, but actually there's going to be a big public backlash against that elsewhere.

I think it is being driven by the brands already. Over in the UK, again, if you can't put a number of how much carbon you've used on a piece, you're not going to get chosen as a supplier. That's how big it is over here. It is coming to the states, whether it's legislated for or not.

**[0:22:46] DC:** Yes. Matthew, I don't disagree with you. It is definitely coming. I just want to say that, I spoke with the printer yesterday who works with a large financial institution. They were talking to them about joining a program that helps them offset their carbon and the large financial institution literally said, "We don't care about that at all." However, their competitors do.

I know this because I get mail from competitors who are extremely focused on this. I agree that consumers will start making decisions about that. Okay, when we come back, we're going to do a two-for-one and wrap up this podcast.

[MESSAGE]

**[0:23:31] DC:** Print Buying UKvUSA is a series dedicated to helping printers create stronger, more meaningful, and more profitable relationships with print customers on both sides of the pond. I'm Deborah Corn, founder of Project Peacock and Principal at Print Media Centr.

**[0:23:50] MP:** I'm Matthew Parker, the Champion of Print at [profitableprintrelationships.com](http://profitableprintrelationships.com).

**[0:23:55] DC:** We may not always agree, but that's when it gets interesting. So, turn up the volume, get out your notepad, and welcome to the program.

[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

**[0:24:11] DC:** Okay, welcome back everybody. We're talking about two things from each of us that we would hope that printers are thinking about or will start thinking about next year. Just to tag on to my first one, which is drupa, I want to double down on that and say that next year it is going to be extremely, extremely, extremely important for printers, especially those mid-level printers, not to say no to jobs, no matter what that is. Being able to handle, even though they don't want to, many smaller jobs than some bigger jobs.

The reason why I'm saying this is tacked onto drupa is because it's a way to look at what is coming as far as automation tools, as far as robotics, as far as software, as far as things that can help printers get jobs in and out of the print shop as fast as possible, still with the same quality and results that everybody is looking for with the lowest amount of human touches and even perhaps environmental impact.

Now, I want to say that I am fully aware that this is not a new concept, it has been spoken about for many years. But we're getting to the point where we're at the fork in the road. We're going to have those people who will be able to continue what they do and even take business from the

print shops that are merging or closing because they can't keep up. The ones who will grind it until they just don't have those, their customers anymore, because other people can add technology to it, can get it in and out faster and with a lower cost, not because it's not valuable, but because there's less humans, less time involved, and things of that nature.

Getting somebody who can find new business, getting people in the print shop who can manage and help the production floor manage many small jobs, maybe even dabbling in – I can't believe I'm saying this out loud and I don't want everyone to fall off their chairs, but dabbling in creating a consumer website for photo books and things like that, just doing it locally. I understand you're competing with Shutterfly and all that other stuff, but don't forget you have employees who have families, you have customers who have families. Why can't they get a photo book from you if they can get it from Shutterfly?

Really looking at your offerings, trying to productize them as much as possible, and stay competitive with all of those online print sites that aren't going anywhere that are actually consolidating and growing. Eventually, that's where I see this all going. We have our online closed-door facilities that you never see anybody. Then you still have your printers out there who let's say they're more craft-oriented, or service-oriented, or they're for the bigger customers with the bigger budgets that need and want to engage with people about their projects. That's my thing. Finding new business in new ways and looking at your operation as how can we make this a lean, mean, potentially green fighting machine.

**[0:27:55] MP:** I love your rhyming there, Deborah. I totally agree automation is key. I think the trends that are going to happen in 24 was like you said, it's not a new topic, but it's a constantly evolving topic. The trends that are going to happen in '24 are going to be around, first of all, most printers can have a set of workflows and they nailed together slightly, but they don't always have a complete one throughout. There's a number of solutions I'm aware of that are getting your different workflows to talk to each other in a much better way, so as much less human touch. I think that's going to be one.

The other one is going to be robotics. From health and safety and implying less people, people should be looking more at robotics. The solutions are coming in now for the medium-level companies. You don't have to be a massive corporation to justify a robot. It's coming in much

further down the line than you might think. I think that's going to only be going one way. That's going to get bigger and bigger, and you should be looking at that.

**[0:29:02] DC:** When we're not talking about C3PO running the press. We're talking about, like there's a thing that puts the boards, and takes the boards, and moves the boards and he was like, I don't know. There's a restaurant by me where a little robot delivers your food like it could move paper across the print shop. Think about what Amazon does, if you're a fulfillment house and how that works, without people going up and down on ladders, little robots are doing it. That's what we're talking about.

**[0:29:31] MP:** It's a good clarification. It's there, particularly in the terms of palletizing, moving materials, and loading things. You don't need two or three people trying to keep up on the machine anymore. You've got an efficient robot that never gets tired, doesn't call in sick, and doesn't break any health and safety laws by mistake causing you problems. You came back to the business-to-consumer sites. You have to have, if you're going to get this to work, you have to have a niche good idea. You have to have the appetite and the budget to get it out there and into the search engines. Otherwise, you will not get enough traction to justify the investment.

The big trade printers have already got the generalistic consumer ones. If you can find one for a really specific niche, go for it. But it's going to be a tough battle. There's some software providers who are interested in selling you the software around this, and by no means all of them, but who may be making out that it's a little easier than it really is. You really have to go into that cautiously.

I'm not saying it's a bad strategy, but if you're just going to go in and go, "I think I'll try and do some business to consumer" without a really solid plan of exactly who you're getting where and how you're going to differentiate from the big sites, then you're really going to struggle. But you should be going out and finding new ways to find business because as in every year, you're going to lose around about 15% of your existing business because that's just your normal churn. You've got to find 15% of business just to stay still. If you want to grow, you're going to have to find even more than that.

**[0:31:12] DC:** Right. We'll get off of this, because I don't want to be a dead horse, so to speak. But what I mean is like not to launch a site that you're trying to attract the entire world to print with you. I'm talking about if I'm a consumer and if the holidays are coming up, I already know that Shutterfly is going to start sending emails, digital ads about photo books, about holiday things that they do, the cards, the automated cards, the holiday cards, upload a picture of your family. I mean, everybody does that online.

Okay, they have the market shares as well as the other companies like that. Shutterfly is the one I see all the time, right? Now, if somebody doesn't know the word Shutterfly and they put in a search term "photo book", there is a way, Shutterfly is going to be first, whatever, it's going to be first, no problem, but with the right amount of attention on your Google My Business and a couple of consultations with some SEO people me strategy around it, there's no reason why. Where do you live again?

**[0:32:23] MP:** I live near Bath in the Southwest of England.

**[0:32:25] DC:** Okay. So, let's just say that Bath photo books shows up, right? I'm just making a photo book. It's not, what am I doing? Someone's uploading photos and I'm printing them out, right? But to get in that game, I would probably, if I was not aware of the process of Shutterfly, if I was just a regular person on the street, I would more than likely want to work with somebody I could go into the store and talk to, is all I'm saying. That's what I mean by get into the consumer space, not to try to take over everything that Shutterfly is doing, but to try to at least get yourself in the game. I believe that play is local. Matthew, any final thoughts on that before we go to our last topic?

**[0:33:15] MP:** I know some larger printers who've gone into that and gone out again very quickly. You have to be able to get the volume in order to be able to manage the one-off orders and you do not want to be talking to someone on a one-to-one basis on making a photo book in my opinion.

**[0:33:31] DC:** Okay, everybody, go back to my point, which is that you have to set yourself up to accept many, many, many small orders. You're making my point for me. Thank you very much. What is your last point, Matthew Parker?

**[0:33:44] MP:** Okay, my last one is experiential marketing. I've been listening some interesting podcasts on marketing recently. A number of people think that we're going to be moving away from the typical kind of mass emails, AdWords, because it's noisy, it's getting more and more expensive. People are going to be looking at the experiences that drive community and word-of-mouth marketing. Print has traditionally said, "Okay, we can't beat email, but we can help email work even better when we work together." It's shown, you're looking at me confused here, Deborah.

**[0:34:22] DC:** Because, who the hell said, email beats print? It's the craziest thing I ever heard.

**[0:34:26] MP:** I didn't say that. I said that print said, "We can't beat email, because it's so omnipresent."

**[0:34:30] DC:** Okay. That makes no sense to me.

**[0:34:32] MP:** But we can make email –

**[0:34:35] DC:** I read my relevant mail in my mailbox. I don't need anything that I don't understand what it is or who it came from in my email box. So, whoever in the print industry is saying that, please come see me.

**[0:34:48] MP:** Okay. So, traditionally, the lines have been drawn between email and AdWords and print as marketing. I think now a lot of people are going to start moving away from those traditional modes. We're going to see new forms of marketing. I heard someone saying that in about a year or so you'll be able to make a full-length feature film from AI, very little input from yourself. It's marketing gold if you start doing that. They're going to move away from the traditional ideas and they're going to start looking more at things that are going to catch people's attention in a way that email can't. They're going to start conversations where people are going to start saying, "Hey, have you seen this? Let's talk about it."

It goes, I won't say viral, but it gets known by a relevant community. I've seen it happening already. Another example of that is Discord and I see small breweries running their own communities on Discord in a way that you couldn't get that traction on email or direct mail. You

couldn't get that level of referral from those ways as well. Print is going to have to think about how it enters the experiential marketing market if that makes sense.

**[0:36:04] DC:** Yeah. It does. Yeah.

**[0:36:06] MP:** If someone's doing a feature film, can a printer do the book of the film or instead of doing a feature film, I remember years ago I was involved in a project for a very big accountancy firm over here that wanted to attract more groups. Instead of going out with traditional marketing, they wrote a novel and created a book. It was a really good book. Good story, but it showed them up as a great employer at the same time and attracted people that way. What can Print do to enter this marketplace? It's time to move away from maybe the traditional direct mail and think about other ideas that marketers and brands can take up on and that it gets you away from single-use Print, as well.

[MESSAGE]

**[0:36:49] DC:** Like what you hear? Leave us a comment, click a few stars, share this episode and please subscribe to the show. Are you interested in being a guest and sharing your information with our active and growing global audience? Podcasts are trending as a potent direct marketing and educational channel for brands and businesses who want to provide portable content for customers and consumers. Visit [printmediacentr.com](http://printmediacentr.com), click on podcasts, and request a partner package today. Share long and prosper.

[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

**[0:37:21] MP:** Deborah, your thoughts on that?

**[0:37:23] DC:** Okay, well, I don't disagree with you, although I don't think that it means doing away with direct mail. It just means making it more meaningful. I certainly agree that especially in America, we have this thing where we have at least PRINTING United Alliance, for example, the organization. Something came out that finance banks and utilities and – oh, no, I'm sorry. It was investment companies, like a Charles Schwab and things of that nature. Basically, opted everybody out of print for their statements. If you wanted it, if you wanted to print, you had to do



something about that to get the print instead of the other way around, which is typically you get the statements unless you opt out of them.

In a, "Hey, you kids get off my lawn" moment, they wanted to lobby against this. Let's lobby against progress and the way that everybody in the world functions, I get electronic statements and all that other stuff and this was a specific group of people, obviously. Now, we could say that there might be discrimination things about that because not everybody has access to the internet and things of that nature, but in this particular group of people that are making these investments with these companies, it's probably a pretty good assumption that all of those people do have access to get their statements electronically.

My point is this, fighting it, fighting it publicly makes us look like luddites, instead of grabbing a group of people together and saying, "Okay, this statement thing, we know it's been coming for a long time, a long time. We haven't done anything about it, right? Now, we're just going to fight that it's happening, or we're just going to pretend that we're fighting because they're not going to change anything about it," right?

My point is this, instead of investing your time in that, invest your time in having a think tank and saying, "How can we make a statement, a communication from these companies, not just a statement?" So, for example, I'll just take a credit card company as an example, although this was related to financial institutions, but they're not opting you out yet, but they're still pushing you to go that way. My credit card company knows everything that I purchase. It's just a matter of fact. It's where they see all my transactions. What if my statement was actually a mini lifestyle magazine for me?

They know what I'm interested in. They could potentially make money from advertisements, from airlines, or from certain stores. I can get articles about if they see I travel a lot about destinations that I might want to go to, and at the end of that little magazine is my statement, or is some information, or I could click on the QR code and go look at it. All I'm saying is that fighting to keep the same thing is like the trade shows just taking 2019 and put it in 2023 and saying, "Okay, everybody, let's go." Instead of being part of the conversation, which is print is not first in many cases in marketing anymore.

It used to be. It used to be first and then broadcast. I mean, it was timed together. Now it's not like that. Digital is first, right? If digital is first, or it is the way that these companies are going, then our conversation should be centered around how can we support this? Not, how can we make it go away? Because look, it's going to go away. Now, what are we supposed to do about that? That is what – I can't believe I'm saying this either. That's what a dying industry says, instead of saying, “Huh, we agree. There shouldn't be statements anymore.” To your point, single-use print, right? Here's my statement. I look at it, I throw it in the garbage, right? How can we take that application and make it something valuable to people that they want it, that they want to opt into it, that they want to do things?

I agree with what you're saying. I really hope that people start thinking more along these lines of everything you just said about the discord community for the brewery, right? There's print opportunities now, loyalty cards when they go and shop if they don't shop online. Sending them information about a beer that's coming. I understand they can do it online, but it's like also a VIP invitation to some of those members to be the first to taste a new beer and write reviews online to go back and participate online with the community. There is a way to still support their mission with print. The problem is that we want to tell them their mission is, “Your mission is wrong, because we need to keep printing statements.” It's just going to grind us into the ground of a relevance with people who really don't want their statements anymore. Final thoughts and then we're wrapping up the podcast.

**[0:42:46] MP:** Yeah. I'd like to finish up, I agree totally what you're saying. I'd just like to finish up with two success examples of this. On the transactional stuff, they've been companies over here that have been doing statements, that have been much more experiential with much more information for years over here. I don't think you can make them into an entire magazine, because of the money rules. You have to have a certain amount of visibility in your statement, but they certainly use the space on the statement for personalized messaging, which is something that print can do with the statement. That's been being done for years.

Experiential prints at craft breweries. There's one brewery over here, Northern Monk, and they actually have brilliant labels. They've got a series of beers that support local artists. I could show you one on video, but I drank it the other night and I put it in the recycling, but they have a peel-

off label and instead of it just being the label around the can, it peels off into a much bigger artwork piece that shows that artist off and it's lovely.

**[0:43:44] DC:** Brilliant. Exactly. There you go. Yeah.

**[0:43:47] MP:** This is how the print industry can help with these sorts of things. Just as an example of how it has been done really, really well, it's not even about the loyalty calls of the VIP invitations. It's about taking something and doing something that I'd never seen before that creates a new buzz around their beers. It's become a regular series of beers. It's a big marketing thing for them. It can be done.

**[0:44:11] DC:** Yeah. I like that a lot. I think that's great. Okay, everybody. Hopefully we have given you some things to think about. Please, engage with our posts when we share them on LinkedIn. We haven't put an open call out for guests in a while. If anybody wants to come on and go a few rounds with Matthew Parker and I. Get in touch and we'll see if we can't work out a topic. This is actually our last podcast of the year. Matthew, thank you so much for your time and your thought leadership in 2023.

I believe we have agreed to ride again in 2024. We have, however, if you've noticed, hopefully, we have switched to a bi-monthly cadence to give our podcast more time to marinate in between. There's lots of discussion about them online. Make sure you're following Matthew on his social channels, but especially on LinkedIn. He does a much better job than me starting discussions about our podcast. I'm just the churn and burn and get them out there, but Matthew really has been creating community conversations about them that have been really informative and enlightening in some cases. Make sure you connect with him. You want to say happy holidays and anything to everybody?

**[0:45:34] MP:** Yeah. Happy holidays. Thank you for listening this year. We appreciate each and every one of you listening, but we especially appreciate those of you who hit the like or subscribe on the podcast channels that get it out there. We appreciate each and every one of you and we can't wait to be sharing more content with you in 2024. We've got some really good ideas coming up and we're looking forward to sharing them with you. Have, hopefully, you're getting some a break at the end of the year. Have a good break. We'll see you back in 2024.

Deborah, it's been a pleasure sparring with you. I always enjoy our conversations, the challenges you give me, and the fact that we can have a healthy debate around these things and put two different points of view. That's the whole point of this podcast really, isn't it?

**[0:46:17] DC:** It certainly is. I could not have a better sparring partner than you, Matthew Parker.

**[0:46:23] MP:** Thank you.

**[0:46:24] DC:** Welcome. Okay, everybody. Again, thank you so much for your time, for your attention, for making Podcasts from the Printerverse and this series part of your day. Until next time, print long and prosper.

[OUTRO]

**[0:46:41] DC:** Thanks for listening to Podcasts from the Printerverse. Please subscribe, click some stars, and leave us a review. Connect with us through [printmediacentr.com](http://printmediacentr.com). We'd love to hear your feedback on our shows and topics that are of interest for future broadcasts. Until next time, thanks for joining us. Print long and prosper.

[END]

### **Mentioned in This Episode:**

drupa: <https://www.drupa.com/>

Matthew Parker: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/profitableprintrelationships/>

Profitable Print Relationships: <https://profitableprintrelationships.com>

Deborah Corn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/deborahcorn/>

Print Media Centr: <https://printmediacentr.com>

Project Peacock: <https://ProjectPeacock.TV>

Girls Who Print: <https://girlswhoprint.net>

Print Across America: <https://printacrossamerica.com/>