

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:05] DC: It takes the right skills and the right innovation to design and manage meaningful print marketing solutions. Welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse, where we explore all facets of print and marketing that create stellar communications and sales opportunities for business success. I'm your host, Deborah Corn, the Intergalactic Ambassador to the Printerverse. Thanks for tuning in. Listen long and prosper.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:31] DC: Hey, everybody. Welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse. This is Deborah Corn, your Intergalactic Ambassador. Today, we are beaming down under, down under, which is the left, I guess, to the southwest, east of Australia. Is that correct, Shane?

[0:00:49] SG: South East. Yes.

[0:00:50] DC: Okay. But going down under, down, under, we're speaking with Shane Golder. He is the Managing Director of Cassette in Auckland, New Zealand. You might be my first kiwi on the podcast, actually.

[0:01:01] SG: Awesome. Let's go.

[0:01:03] DC: Cassette is a brand production business with over 50 years of combined experience in design and print processes. Combining that experience with excellent project management skills, Cassette provides clients with a comprehensive and competitive print management and advisory service. They can work directly with marketing teams, or alongside creative agencies to deliver the best possible outcomes. Do you guys say good day down there too? Good day?

[0:01:35] SG: Yeah. Good day. How's it going?

[0:01:37] DC: Excellent.

[0:01:38] SG: Great to be here.

[0:01:40] DC: Thank you so much. What time is it in Auckland, New Zealand at the moment?

[0:01:43] SG: It is 6am. I'm up early.

[0:01:47] DC: Ooh, boy. You're really up early over there. First of all, I want everyone to know that we met through my LinkedIn group, which we will get to in a minute. Before we do go there, can you let everybody know a bit more about you and the work you do at Cassette?

[0:02:02] SG: Yeah. Basically, we're a graphic design and brokerage firm. We deal directly with marketing businesses here in New Zealand. We prefer to deal with larger corporations that have smaller marketing teams down here based in New Zealand. Just a bit of background on New Zealand. Yeah, we're three and a half hours away from our nearest neighbor, Australia. That's by flight, so about 2,100 kilometers, or for our American audience, 1,300 miles. I did Google that, of course.

[0:02:34] DC: Wow, I'm impressed.

[0:02:36] SG: Yeah. With our clients, because we're dealing with smaller teams, we try and just be the one-stop shop, I suppose, and we'll do everything in the simple business card right through to for our larger FMCG champagne companies. We'll brand bars. We will do full activations. We have branded champagne trolleys. We've made champagne trolleys. For our automotive companies, we'll do everything from their 32-page catalogue that they will use to show off their cars, right through to sign writing the cars and branding the full interiors of their showrooms. Yeah, we keep it interesting. Yeah, it's fun. It's super fun. We love being in print.

[0:03:20] DC: Point of clarification. Champagne trolley. You mean like a truck, a train? What's a trolley, a shopping cart?

[0:03:28] SG: Yeah. You know how you'll see people walk through a nice restaurant and they've got a champagne.

[0:03:32] DC: Yeah, like if they're going to make you a Caesar salad, or guacamole.

[0:03:36] SG: Exactly. Exactly. I'm actually not sure. I've always just called it a champagne trolley. I'm not sure what else. Probably got a great name.

[0:03:44] DC: I love it.

[0:03:45] SG: I haven't even used it.

[0:03:46] DC: Yeah, you should TM that. I love it. Okay, listen. We definitely need some education about the New Zealand print market to just start off. I will preface this by saying that the closest I've gotten to New Zealand was Sydney, Australia, which is we still know, I still had quite a way to go to get to New Zealand. When I got there, I honestly thought that the printing industry would basically be like a cage match fight with everybody fighting over every dollar for print and try – because there's a sum total there, right? If somebody gets a job, somebody doesn't get a job. I thought that there would be this extreme level of competition, but it wasn't like that at all. It was one of the most friendliest co-opertition I've ever seen.

I'm really curious about the, from a 30,000-foot view, what is the print marketing landscape like in New Zealand, in regard to how much – is there some total of work that you are fighting over, of course? Then, I wonder if there's any hot print and design trends that you've identified this year so far.

[0:04:56] SG: Okay, so New Zealand, we're like the Canadians of the South Pacific, I suppose, and Australia's big brother, just like the Americans next door. We only have five million people. As I said, our nearest neighbor is three hours away. We are super friendly to each other, but it is also a very competitive market. I would say, we're probably still a little bit oversaturated in the amount of print companies that are around. Over the last couple of years, especially since COVID, we have seen a lot of mergers and acquisitions and unfortunately, some of the print finishing companies and stuff, the traditional ones that only did that, we've seen a couple of the really old – really good ones, too, disappear. They've just gone under. Just lately, one just went under last week.

Yeah, I think we are still all friendly with each other. I know a lot of the managing directors of different print companies get together, hang out, and chat about what's going on. Yeah, at the same time, ultra-competitive for the work, because, yeah, we are a small country, but there are a lot of printers spread out around the place.

[0:06:03] DC: This year, are you noticing any design and printing trends that are being requested, or people talking about different things this year? Or have you ascertained any patterns?

[0:06:16] SG: We're getting a lot of requests randomly for leather-bound covers and leather-bound menus. We've actually done quite – we've maybe done already this year, five or six larger jobs on buffalo leather and leather pressing it and embossing it and foiling it. Yeah, I think that's been a really cool thing that we've seen this year that seems to – I don't know where it's come from. Someone's obviously seen one and then it's semi-taken off. We're still just seeing a lot of the traditional PUR-bound magazines and the like, I think, they never get old and people still love to see them. Yeah. We are seeing also, probably a resurgence of people chasing those different papers as well. The more textured, I think we're seeing a bit of that of a comeback. Maybe it is because the 90s fashion is coming back. The papers are also making a bit of a comeback. For a while, everyone just ignored them and went with a simple white over the last – but that's certainly seen a resurgence.

[0:07:14] DC: When I gave the introduction for you based upon the information I saw on your LinkedIn profile, what you wrote about your company, what was on your website, you described it as a competitive print management and advisory service, which I think of as one thing. Then when you described what you did, you said it was a print brokerage, which I think is another thing. Can you just share how those two worlds collide? Then I want to get into the craziness of those two worlds colliding.

[0:07:41] SG: Yeah. I suppose, we do do a bit of both. I was probably trying to simplify it with the – when we're dealing directly, especially with the marketing teams, we're definitely coming up with ideas with them. We're working with their agencies. What we find again in New Zealand is that, especially dealing with the larger brands that they will see things, or activations that are done in the likes of London, or New York. They're amazing and they're awesome.

But they've also got amazing, awesome budgets, although the people putting those things together probably think differently. But in New Zealand, obviously, with such a small population, we'll get a tenth, if not even 5% of the budget and asked to try and recreate that. Trying to make things especially look premium for the likes of the champagne brands is a challenge, but it's a fun challenge of trying to go, okay, they've done it like this. We can use different methods, or different print to try and put it all together.

Then, when I'd say, the print brokerage part of the business is we do deal with large automotive companies that have dealerships spread out around the country, and we'll have an online system. We'll preprint their brochures, their mirror, the hangers on the mirrors, and all the different things that they're going to use to help sell their cars. We have an online system that all their dealerships around the country can log into and purchase and they will distribute those. That's probably a little bit more transactional, I suppose. But I suppose that would be the major difference that I see across those. Yeah.

[0:09:17] DC: You could potentially have clients that you help create files for, but you don't print them, and clients that you only print for and don't want you touching their files, or being part of their creative development. Of course, their Nirvana being somebody who comes to you to do both, right?

[0:09:34] SG: A little bit of both. Yeah. I think, even with the clients that we don't create the artwork with that they have a fully-fledged agency that is working on that side of the business, we still do collaborate with the agency of just how to lay out different files for, if they're doing a huge window decal, 6 meters by 5 meters on the side of a other building, we might just give them a little bit of advice on, we're going to have – we're going to put the terms and conditions, so they don't get cut off, because there's a lot more movement on a huge window decal than maybe they've assumed someone's putting it up.

There is still a little bit of advice going on there. But yes. Then we do a lot of our own graphic design for some of our clients. Yes, we do do for – I keep saying do do. We also do the graphic design for some of our clients that we don't look after the print. Or there just isn't print involved. It's all online.

[0:10:33] DC: I mean, the only reason I wanted to ask about that is because it's really, when I said before, it's the Nirvana, it is the brass ring of the perfect client to where you're helping develop the client of the file, so you know that they'll print correctly and they'll be happy with it, and you're not wasting time and money fixing files, but you also are able to – you're not bound by your own equipment, because you can work with any of your suppliers that have the right equipment at the right time, without being beholden to anybody. It's a weird situation.

When you go back to more competitive – I don't want to say you're not in a competitive market, but I mean, cutthroat competitive markets, the marketing agencies don't want to really deal with the printers who also offer marketing services, because they're afraid the printers are going to go after their customers, and the brokers don't want to share the information of who their suppliers are, because they're afraid the clients are going to go directly to the printers and basically, skipping all over the middle people, which in many cases, you are.

I think it's why you have called it a comprehensive and competitive print management and advisory service, which is a lot better than a marketing service provider, which is what some printers have decided, I think, unfortunately, to call themselves.

[0:12:00] SG: Yeah. I think the key is always, it's just being honest with everybody. This is what we do. This is how we make our money. Just try and be of value to everybody in the room and not being afraid to just say, “Look, this is what we do. These are the printers that we use. This is why, could you try and do it yourself?” Maybe, but do you know the difference between what's going to be small format digital? Do you know what's going offset? Do you know what's going wide format? Just showing them that there is an advantage to using us both monetary, but more a speed to market. I think speed to market for everybody is key, especially the larger design agencies, because they're trying to put together amazing campaigns with the end-user client and they always end up condensing timeframes to get things done at the end because they're running a social campaign. They're running a television commercial and then print becomes the end and they're like, “Oh, no. We've only got three days to get everything out to market.”

If you can come in and semi-be the white knight, then everyone's happy. Yeah, and we end up dealing with a lot of those design agencies direct because we've made it work with the client that we were already working with.

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[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:14:14] DC: I really do understand what you're saying in many ways on a very deep level. I did work in advertising for more than 25 years as a print buyer. Sometimes I was a very difficult client, I will admit that. Sometimes I was the best client in the world. But it really depended upon who the client I was representing and what their demands were and what the amount of pressure that we were getting from the account people and the creative directors and all the other things. Of course, we need our vendors to work with us under all situations. The reason that I prefaced this next question this way is because you really do have choices that other people don't have because you're seeing more about the client's business, or your client's businesses and their goals.

But that doesn't mean that they're all right for you. I'm really curious how – and you have actually, you actually just posted a video about this in my LinkedIn group today, which I thought was very interesting. My question to you is, how do you assess clients and when do you know, “Uh-uh. I got to pass on this one”?

[0:15:22] SG: I think this comes with experience. I think any printer will probably know this as well is that you end up having to disqualify harder and disqualify clients faster than the ones that you accept. For us, we're very cognizant that our ideal client is a small marketing team of a larger organization. That is always our main focus. Other people will come to us. It's really about

trying to figure out, what do they actually need and what do they want? Are we actually going to offer any value here?

Just the other week, I had a lady randomly call up and say, “Hey, look. A design agency has recommended you and I need signage and I need this.” She was full on, just down the phone. “And you guys need it to be perfect.” I was like, “Hold on. Who are you and where are you from? Who's recommended us?” For a strange reason, she wouldn't tell me who even recommended us. That was a red flag. If you can't be honest about who's recommended us as a supplier, then are you going to be honest about when we're going to receive files and how are things going to get out?

I was really quick to go, “Hey, look. Can we at least discuss who you are? What you're doing? What are your future? Is this just a one-off rebrand? Or is it going to be real work down the road?” Again, she was really apprehensive to give me any information. In the end, I was just like, “Hey, look. I just don't think you're right for us.” She was just like, “But it's good business.” I was like, “Well, I don't know what the business is, because you won't even tell me. I don't know if it's good business.” She ended up hanging up on me, which I just thought was funny.

I do find that anytime we break our rule of who we will deal with, and it could be for friends, or it could just be you're tired at the end of the day and it seems like a good idea that we end up just getting ourselves into trouble, and you end up spending so much more time on people that aren't suitable to your business. You just end up letting down the client. You can't spend the time on the clients that are perfect for your business. That's always a big one for us, is to really stay focused. Yes, we'll deal with this agency, because they also deal with XYZ client. Yes, we'll deal with this PR company, because again – or, and for us, it needs to be regular monthly, at least bi-monthly work.

Or if it is a one-off job that happens yearly, it's got to be of a certain size to make it worth our while, because you are going to be, as I said, spending your precious time dealing with that job, rather than dealing with, as I said, the regular clients that just every month send a solid amount of work.

[0:18:20] DC: Flipping this around, how do you assess your suppliers?

[0:18:25] SG: The biggest one for us is how do they deliver on time, is always speed to market, as I said, for our clients, for as always critical, because, yeah, files are always running late, etc., etc. That's our biggest one. I know I quite often meet with new printers and they will try and take us out for lunch, or whatever. They always end up talking about their – they all say the same things. They always say, “We've got good quality, good service,” da, da, da. They talk about themselves. Then at the end, they just go, “Can we quote some stuff?” It's always –

[0:19:02] DC: Preaching. Go.

[0:19:06] SG: It's like, have you ever been at a party, or on a date, and the person just talks about themselves the whole entire time, who they know, where they've been, all that stuff? I find some print people can be, or just salespeople in general, I suppose, can be very similar. They talk about their quality, the service, the award stuff won, and their clients. I'm like, that's cool, but what is that – what problem of mine are you solving? They very rarely do. But what my major problem is always is speed to market and communication.

Inevitably, I've been a production manager of a printing company, I've worked in sales and printing companies. Things are going to go wrong. Every job is a new job. You have to start from scratch, even if it's something you do monthly. The files are new. You've just got to put fresh ink onto paper in some way, or toner. Things are going to go wrong. It's how people communicate that. The ones that are quickly on the phone and telling you like, look, this deadline might not be met, because of XYZ. The press is down, our folder broke, our PUR binder's down, etc.

People that do that, I love, because we have a multitude of suppliers. If your press is broken down and I know right now, I might be able to get it on. If your folder is broken down, we can maybe move it somewhere else and get it folded, or stitched. I know that printers are reticent to call their opposition to try and get things fixed. But the ones that hunker down and try and sort the problem by themselves and don't solve it, that's the super frustration. They will be the ones that end up definitely at the bottom of the list next time.

Because yeah, sometimes you might only – if you've ordered 5,000 of something, you might only need 200, or 250 for the event that's tomorrow, but they've got a series of events. I can solve that problem by just getting 250 digitally done somewhere else if you're just an offset

printer or something. There's a multitude of ways to solve a problem, but you've got to know the problem exists.

[0:21:22] DC: Exactly. Okay, so you should be very afraid because we're in a hive-mind situation right now. It's probably because I was a production person in an advertising agency, but I couldn't agree with you more. As a matter of fact, maybe a few months ago was having a conversation, and I was trying to convince printers that the best testimonials they could have are from customers who had disasters. Not random disasters, but disasters that happen on just the normal course.

Everything you just said, it's not anyone's fault that the machine went down, but it's going to go down. Don't blame it on the weather. Don't make it something that the print shop wasn't responsible for, right? But have that customer say everything you just said. They let me know what was going on. They brought three options to the table of how I could still get what I need, including dividing up how many I needed tomorrow, versus how many I needed next week. We worked out a plan. The client never even knew what happened. I highly recommend this printer for that reason. I have never provided a recommendation for a printer based on, they've got the best quality, the best price, and the best service.

[0:22:38] SG: Yeah, exactly.

[0:22:39] DC: Never.

[0:22:40] SG: Yeah. I think, yeah, one of the big ones is as a print buyer, or as a client, I couldn't care less about your machinery. Well, within respect.

[0:22:50] DC: Yes, of course.

[0:22:51] SG: I want the job out. I do send digital jobs to digital printers and dye sub jobs to dye sublimation, obviously. But I don't want to sit and have a conversation about your press for two hours. It doesn't interest me. Yeah. When a new one comes out, it's not – it's slightly interesting. I do like to go in and see. But it's a 10-minute conversation, not a multitude of, you know. Yeah, I

think, yeah, it's that old saying that, "People are motivated to buy for their reasons, not your reasons."

[0:23:22] DC: Yeah. Oh, my God. We are the same person. I think I'm a little scared for you, but I always say the same thing, too. I'm like, "Dude, I'm not building a press. I don't care what's inside there. Just tell me what I can make with it."

[0:23:36] SG: A 100%.

[0:23:37] DC: Then if it, okay, we've got this new press and it goes 37,000 meters a minute. I'm like, uh, my eyes are blazed over. Instead of just saying, "We have a new printing technology that we really – you'll have more time to create your files and there'll be less time between when you give them to me and where they need to go to get delivered, why don't you come on over and see it?" I'm like, "More time?" As you know, a day in an advertising agency is a year. I will take that day. Now I'm interested in everything about what I can do with this press. Not how fast it goes. Not the technical specs of it, but its performance.

[0:24:18] SG: Oh, a 100%. Someone with an old-school two-color GTO that can do amazing work with it is just as cool as someone that's got the latest technology. Again, it's just about solving my problems. I know a lot of also, always comes up as everyone's like, "Oh, we know it's all about price." It's like, price falls about, like I said, fourth, fifth on the list.

[0:24:43] DC: Oh, I was going to say third. Okay, fourth. Good.

[0:24:46] SG: Yeah, probably third. It could be third. I was trying to think of what the other ones are, but yeah.

[0:24:50] DC: Speed to market a 100% first.

[0:24:50] SG: On time. High quality.

[0:24:52] DC: Exactly.

[0:24:53] SG: Looking good. Great communication. Yeah, I'd put communication way ahead of price, because until you have four suppliers that could all do the same thing and that I trust that are going to communicate well, do the job well, take their time and deliver on time, then you might start looking at price. I would say, personally, we send say, 60% or 70% of work without even getting a price to our preferred suppliers that you know. Sometimes, I'll send it to someone based on their geography also.

[0:25:28] DC: Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

[0:25:30] SG: Even here within Auckland City where we have – if you look at it on a map, the east coast and west coast are only like a few kilometers, or a few miles apart. We have a harbor bridge that goes over and that, like any city just, gets clogged up with traffic at rush hour. If something has to be delivered at 3pm on a Friday, or 4pm on a Friday, we'll print on the side of the bridge that it's being delivered to, because we know that if they're running late, it's just not going to arrive on time. Simple things like that.

[0:26:00] DC: It totally is. I just love everything that you're saying.

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[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:26:57] DC: I just have one last question about this. Can you share an experience you had where you met with a supplier and they actually did the research about you and came to the table with something that they could solve for you?

[0:27:11] SG: It doesn't happen often. It usually happens when someone that we've been dealing with moves companies. Would happen more often than anybody actually coming to us. I would say, again, 90% of people that come to us do those same price conversations. We'll quote competitively, we've got great quality and service. Unfortunately, it doesn't really happen. To any printer out there, if you can do that, we'll appreciate it and you'll be a hit of the game.

[0:27:44] DC: Yeah. I mean, I probably did more research for this podcast than half of your suppliers did trying to get a meeting with you. I also just want to go back for one thing that we were just talking about, about those three most important things. Shane and I are talking about marketing agencies, brands, and clients, their list of priorities is always going to be speed to market, is always going to be number one. A sandwich shop on the corner, price is more than likely going to be their main concern. We're not talking about that sandwich shop. We're talking about a campaign for the most part.

[0:28:22] SG: Yeah, we're talking about corporate clients. I suppose, what I can do just to go back to your last question is give a comparison of I know when we picked up, we went with one of, well, it's one of the world's largest automotive providers, but their New Zealand operation. We were pitching against one of the largest printing companies here in New Zealand. At the time, I think we had three or four employees. You would think that it was pretty obvious which way they would go. They were also looking at the online system for their dealerships to work off.

The print company went in and did a two-hour presentation of their online system going through all the bells and whistles that it could do, all this magic stuff that they were doing for other clients. By the sounds of it, the marketing department, it was the marketing department, I think it was one procurement person, but they were all super bored. We went in and they were like, "Okay, what are you presenting to us?" I was like, "I don't know what you guys want. What do you actually want, in a perfect world," which I think is always a great question, "What would you want the system to do? Because there are a million different online systems to order for print procurement. What's more important to you? Is it having every single bells and whistles that

you've probably seen? Or is it just a simple system where dealers log on and click on what they want?"

If it was an almost free system, like very, very cheap, would that be helpful? If they could just do simple stuff. They went through what they needed, and it was a 100%, the most simple online system ever. It was a free plug-in to our – I think it cost us \$30 a month or something. It was a simple plug-in to our coding system, so it all worked in. I went back a week later and said, "Okay, you guys said you wanted this. I can do this. It said you want to you wanted to be able to just click. You wanted to have separate dealer cost systems. You want them invoiced separately. You wanted to cut head office to cover freight around the country because they're added to small orders." They were like, "This is perfect. This is exactly what we need." That was how we picked them out. It was just sitting there and going, not being afraid to not be pitching, so to speak, but just asking some simple, really simple questions about what do you actually want?

I think that's always key is asking, if we were to work together in 12 months, what would make this a perfect experience for you guys to go, "Hey, look. Shane and Cassette are a great supplier because of X, Y, Z." They'll literally sit there and tell you the problems they want you to solve. I think that is super key for any printer out there. They'll tell you their problems if you let them, and if you can solve them.

[0:31:16] DC: Also, their business goals. Often, I'm like, I'll speak with printers. I'm like, call up your clients and have a new business meeting. Not about you getting new business, but how to help them get new business. Find out from them, what is their goal for this month? What is their goal for the quarter? What is their goal for six months? Where do they have to be at the end of the year? Where are the channels, or the communication gaps? Where are people falling off the sales cycle? Let's pinpoint these specific problems you're having and find a print/multi-channel solution, whatever the problem may be. Don't make it about yourselves. Make it about their selves. I think we're saying the exact same thing.

[0:31:59] SG: Oh, a 100%. It's the space between where they are now and where they want to be is where you try and fit in. I think that's a key saying that I've heard before, and that definitely resonates with me is, yeah, trying to be that person in the middle that gets them from where

they are now to where they want. Because everybody has goals, and they all have problems. If you can help them reach their goals, or solve their problem, I think you're 90% of the way there.

[0:32:27] DC: I mentioned that we met in our LinkedIn group, and I also mentioned that you had posted a video today about assessing customers pretty much is what I got out of it. The first video that you posted was you included a quote that said, “The professional does on purpose what the novice does out of ignorance.” Your post got a lot of traction for a video. There was a lot of comments in it, which is also another reason why I was like, “Who is this guy? Why is he saying things that are resonating with everybody?” Because usually, it's more pitchy and less – more about people themselves and not about putting a concept out there. Back to that quote. I don't believe you attributed it to anybody. Do you know who said it and why does that have meaning to you?

[0:33:20] SG: I believe it was – I got that from Benjamin Dennehy, who also goes by the UK's most hated sales teacher or something.

[0:33:30] DC: Oh, I love him already.

[0:33:31] SG: Yeah, UK's most hated sales. He's actually a fellow New Zealander, who is living in the UK. Yeah, sales trainer. UK's most hated sales trainer. Look him up. He's amazing. I think if you are trying to learn how to get new business, I think he's probably one of the best in the trade and really funny. He's definitely got that, as he'd say, the pattern down. Why does it resonate with me? I think it goes back to what we said earlier is when I first started in print, you go through the thing where you ask a lot of questions because you just don't know the answers, which is what the video was about. Asking good questions of your prospects, or clients to try and get to what they want.

I think what happens – well, it happened to me, so I assume it happens to other people is you start learning a bit about the different print processes and you feel like you need to tell the client all about it to show that you know all about printing, so that your print is safe with me. Yeah, you start talking about your printing presses. You start talking about foiling and how you can do this and that. All that happens is, like we said, the person at the other end really doesn't care. They just don't care, and you bore them.

Going back to asking great questions is, I think, always going to help you grow your print business, or grow your sales. Because, yeah, as I said, the answers are there if you allow the client to actually say them, rather than, yeah, talking back at them, or talking about yourself.

[0:35:13] DC: Say, this is exactly what you need. This online portal that has all these things that everybody's eyes were glazing over in that meeting, thinking they needed IT people involved now, instead of just a dealer going in and clicking a few buttons. I mean, know thy audience, right? That's a super important sales tip too, I think.

[0:35:34] SG: Yeah, a 100%. Yeah, and I've seen it happen not that long ago. This was actually quite funny. I was actually a design agent that we deal with. Randomly, when they call us in, we deal with them every now and then, but the managing director was in the meeting and he was telling us how important. They just wanted some sampling done of some packaging that they were designing for one of their large FMCG clients. It was their largest. For them, it was super important that it was perfect. The director's in there, and he's leading it going, "This is super important. The color needs to be this. We might need to reject it a 100 times until it's perfect."

It came back that it was just a little digital job. That was pretty much the way it was going to be done. Yeah, there was going to be some color work required. We have graphic design, so we could color-touch it ourselves if required. One of our suppliers was also asked to go in and they realized quickly that it was an easy job. When they supplied their quote, they said, "This is a really easy job and it's really cheap. This is going to be –" Whereas I looked at it was like, the managing director is telling me, he wants this to be expensive because he wants it perfect and he doesn't want you to come back in two weeks and go, "Oh, we only charged you 500 bucks, mate." You get what you're given kind of thing.

I went in it like, I use them, but added multitudes of margin and worked out if we did need to do some coloring touching, added it all and outlined it, and then sent it to that printer to do the job. They were super confused about how I had got the job, because obviously, in their head, it was based on price. It just wasn't. If the managing director of a huge agency with a 100 employees is sitting in there, or yeah, I didn't know how many they've got, is sitting in the meeting, it's important to them.

[0:37:30] DC: Yeah. Line items for five rounds of proofs, color correction, press check, everything. I love that approach. I had this conversation last night on The Printer Chat Podcast, when I received as a buyer an advertising agency, I always triple bid. Whenever I got a quote that was just seemed really low, I was like, "I don't trust this printer. I don't care. I don't trust this printer." Why do I have to appear in this range? And one is just, I don't know what they're doing to get this work for me in a giant advertising agency. I do not trust all the corners that are going to be have to cut. Maybe not the first time, but they can't keep up this pricing. There's no way in hell.

[0:38:18] SG: This is the other thing. Yeah, humans buy emotionally and they justify intellectually. It's your emotion that hits you. I'm the same. If there's a super lowball price, I'm always like, go back to them. This doesn't seem right. It's way too low. I've had account managers, or the account directors that look after our account and go, "Oh, it's all good. Just send through the order if it's the cheapest." You're like, "Well, no. There's got to be something wrong with this." It's a conversation we end up. Some of our clients do see the pricing. You've got to say like, this is an outlier, and I don't trust it. we really need to be going with one of these other ones. Because if you put this into your budget and it's a regular job and what happens when they go under? All of a sudden, you've got to find another 20% or 30%.

Yeah. We had a large web printer that went under. I think they were a web printer. They went under a year ago. All their pricing was always 20% or 30% below the market. Then all of a sudden, they just disappeared one day. They weren't available. The whole time I'm thinking, these are \$100,000, \$200,000 jobs. If you're missing out on \$40,000, \$50,000 dollars a job that's a lot over a month. That's a huge amount over a year. That worried me.

[0:39:43] DC: Absolutely. Even if they owned the land, even if they owned the building, even if they owned all their equipment, right out, they weren't paying leases on it. Even if they had a lean, mean-fighting shop floor, they should still charge market value and make the money. What is wrong with people? I don't understand.

[0:40:05] SG: Oh, I constantly say this to our suppliers. We'd rather have you charge more and still be here next week. Because we need a multitude of suppliers. That is probably the biggest risk to our business is if we only have one supplier in a category, we can't get things through

fast. Because if you're busy, I've got no hope. I've got, you know. Then we're just going to be competing against each other anyway. We do need a multitude of suppliers. We need a healthy print market to do well. I probably spend, if you were to talk about when I receive quotes, more time suggesting that people put their prices up than that they put their prices down.

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[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:41:22] DC: Yeah. Or just say, “Hey, Shane. I just want to let this particular job is hitting our shop at just the right time. We have the paper on the floor. We have room on the press. I'm going to charge you lower, but just know that this is going to be a one-time situation.” Then you could work out what it is. To your point, nobody's budgeting that price moving forward, because it's not going to be realistic.

The last thing we all want to do is push the race to the bottom, everything, the value of print. That is really, I think, what the biggest problem is right now, is that people – I mean, even in marketing agencies, too, and advertising agencies, I really can't put them to the side anymore. But if they can achieve their goals with digital marketing, the same way they can do with print, and digital marketing is easier for them only because they have an internal team that's handling it, that's the way a business is going to want to go. If there is a perceived value of print, how that piece of print is adding to their business goals, then they're not going to cut out that piece of print.

The problem is when they're marketing people think that those two things are interchangeable and they're not always interchangeable, especially now with all the privacy laws coming through

about sending emails. I haven't clicked on a link, and do you click on random links and emails? I don't even open up emails anymore from people I don't know. There's a lot to all of this, but it boils back down to what is this worth to everybody. You're just so interesting to speak with.

Just going back to that post in the LinkedIn group for one moment, at the bottom of it, you mentioned that you had a content library with more than 20 videos, sharing some of the lessons that you've learned in the print sales game as you put it. I have a compound question for you here. First, why are you focused on creating content for salespeople? If that's even true, I don't want to put words in your mouth. Then, of all those 20 videos, or along your time in the sales game, what lesson do you think has been the most poignant for you?

[0:43:39] SG: I just think, I've seen other people put information out there, and I think a lot of them aren't from the print industry, or they haven't actually worked for a print company. I just seem to feel that that voice was missing, that someone that actually is actually being out there selling print, because a lot of – especially in the sales coaching space, they're selling sales coaching. For them to sell sales coaching to someone in New Zealand, or someone in the UK, or someone in America, you can basically – they can do that just over social media. They can send it out. But and then they say, “You should do that for your print company.” It's like, “Well, it's a little bit more nuanced.” Obviously, geography, you can't send – I'm not going to send a 100 brochures to a client in the UK, or into America. It's just not going to be cost-efficient.

It's trying to just show, I suppose, every print company has limited resources, but a little bit, they have unlimited potential of who they could sell through. It's trying to say, I suppose, as I said, trying to find that space where, yeah, they really narrow down who their target market is, and who they are wanting to sell to because there are difficulties with print. It is physical. You can end up with pallets of stuff. You can't just be sending it anywhere. Yeah, it's probably trying to find, trying to showcase that voice. I have been doing it for 20 years. I've spent a lot of time studying a little bit of sales and trying to offer insight of where I see you can help your printing company and your people.

I suppose a big one for me is probably, as I said, a little bit doing it for myself so that I can get some print people that have better conversations with me. Yeah. It's just probably trying to offer that insight, I suppose, is what I was trying to say. I just rambled through that, actually.

[0:45:33] DC: No, it made total sense. One of the lessons that has been the most poignant for you?

[0:45:39] SG: Oh, it's definitely getting really clear on who your target market company is and the problems that you solve for them. As I said, finding that target market is important, but also, discovering what problem you are solving. Like I said, for us, it's been the busy marketer. They are working in a large organization. They've got heaps of responsibility. They've got events. They've got, as I said, TV commercials. They've got social media campaigns. Then they are kind of, "Oh, no. I've got to organize all this printing stuff. Where do I start?"

For us, it's like nailing that. I think the best way printers can really nail that niche is to figure out themselves, who are our favorite clients to deal with? What industry are they in? What size are they? Where are they located? Then go to the ones that you've already got and ask them like, why did you start dealing with us? Why do you continue to deal with us? If you could say something positive about us, what would it be? Then from there, you can work out what problem you can solve for everybody else. Because again, they will tell you if you ask the right questions.

[0:46:56] DC: I vote you president of print. I think that of all the podcasts I've done, of all the people I've spoken to around the world, you and I are the most aligned about those conversations that matter to customers, to the big print customers. You have this ability because you can speak normally to people like me, to people like them, to really try to understand what they care about, which is different than a budget, to your most excellent points made during the podcast.

I would definitely highly recommend that everybody check out the videos and all the links to everything that Shane and I have discussed will be in the show notes. In case you don't do this, I think you need to get on these international speaking circuit for sales and for print. If you need any help with that, I do have some friends around the world who might be interested. Do you speak at events and things like that? You really should have.

[0:47:55] SG: No. I've never spoken in an event. I think, as I said, I put the videos out. They seem to get some traction on your awesome LinkedIn page. I had been recommended to share some of the stuff, so that's what I did.

[0:48:10] DC: Excellent.

[0:48:12] SG: As I said, I now have the Facebook page and I've posted, I think all the videos now. What I really want to do is start maybe doing a little bit more not live, but week-to-week, like this is what we did this week. This is what we struggled with.

[0:48:25] DC: A weekly review. I love it.

[0:48:27] SG: These are the mistakes I made. Because it might have sounded like everything's perfect. But I have still sat in a meeting and completely blowing it, even months ago. You sit back and you go, "I mucked that one up." I think the real truth is, is you're always going to muck it up. Yeah, there's no perfection. There's just varying degrees of being good. I think you can be tired in a meeting with a new prospect and it doesn't go well. But it usually doesn't go well, because you think you're doing something good by, again, describing what you can do better and you've realized that when you walk out, you're like, "Ah, I mucked that one up. I spoke too much and I talked about this."

Yeah, I've had one only maybe end of last year. They were actually a client that would have been doing a lot of work with, and then they had a lot of change and new marketing people came in. I sat there and I went, hey – stupidly went through, "This is what we've been doing for you and this is how we could do it better." There was one person that worked with for a long time was sitting in the meeting. I could actually see him get annoyed, because I think he thought that I was going, this is how you could do it better. I was saying that he hadn't done it well. He was actually a great guy to deal with. But just that phrasing, I think, he was like, "Man, I got a new manager here. You've told him I'm doing shit." Sorry for the – not sure if you can say that. But, yeah.

[0:49:55] DC: Yeah. You can say shit all you want. Shit, shit, shit. See?

[0:49:57] SG: Yeah, I didn't think about it until I left the meeting and you're just like, "I've mucked that one up." I didn't really ask the new guy what he wanted. It was, yeah. We still make those mistakes.

[0:50:10] DC: Well, everybody, check out the show notes, connect with Shane, watch his videos. In the meantime, I'm going to convince him to try to do a podcast with me. I love this recap. What did I learn last month with Shane? We'll get on that. Until next time, everybody, thank you so much for your time and your attention. Print long and prosper.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:50:35] 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. 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]

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