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beyond technology

From Printer to Partner: Elevate Your Brand and Win More Business

A Practical Marketing Guide for Modern Print Businesses

Adapted from Kemtek & HP's "Educate to Elevate" webinar with Colin Sinclair McDermott, the Online Print Coach.

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About this Ebook

The print and packaging world is changing fast. Shorter runs, more SKUs, digital-first buyers and constant price pressure mean “we print everything” is no longer enough.

This eBook distils key lessons from a Kemtek & HP webinar with Colin Sinclair McDermott, a former printer who now coaches over 70 print companies around the world. It’s written for:

- Label and packaging converters
- Commercial printers
- Flexibles and digital-first print businesses

You’ll learn how to:

- Define your **ideal customer avatars**
- Design a clear **Customer Value Journey**
- Use **content and social media** to attract better-fit clients
- Align your promise with **HP Indigo digital technology**

Use it as a playbook with your sales, marketing and leadership teams.

All visuals in this ebook are illustrative examples created using AI image generation, not photographs of real people, companies or projects. They are designed to help you “see” concepts like customer avatars, before/after messaging and content themes in a more tangible way, without revealing any confidential brand information. Colours, layouts and mock brands are purely inspirational and should be treated as creative prompts you can adapt to your own business, rather than prescriptive design templates or representations of actual Kemtek, HP or customer work.

1. The New Reality for Print Business

Print is not dead. But generic, undifferentiated print is under pressure.

Modern buyers:

- Research online before they speak to sales
- Expect fast, transparent, reliable service
- Want partners who understand their world, not just order-takers

Print businesses are juggling:

- Intense price competition
- Exploding SKUs and shorter runs
- Growth opportunities in labels and flexible packaging
- The shift to digital presses like HP Indigo

Colin's core idea:

“Stop selling print. Start selling the transformation you give your customers.”

Your transformation might be:

- Faster launches for FMCG brands
- Reduced waste and inventory risk
- Stronger shelf impact with better colour and finishes
- Easier ordering for multi-site customers

2. Building Your Customer Avatar

2.1 What is a Customer Avatar?

A customer avatar (or buyer persona) is a detailed description of your ideal buyer in a specific segment. It's not "anyone who needs labels". It's:

- Lerato, Brand Manager at a mid-sized personal care brand
- Sipho, Operations Manager at a regional food manufacturer
- Jenny, Owner of a restaurant group

You use avatars to guide:

- Messaging and offers
- Product development
- Sales focus and priorities
- Content topics

2.2 The Avatar Canvas: Four Core Areas

A. **Who they are**

- Sector, role, responsibilities
- How they currently source print/packaging

B. **Pain points and frustrations**

- Confusing pricing, hidden delivery costs
- Slow turnarounds and missed deadlines
- Poor communication and damaged deliveries
- Confusion about materials and finishes

C. **Aspirations and success factors**

- A trusted partner who makes ordering simple
- High, consistent quality and colour
- Help with design and campaign ideas
- Online tools and portals for multiple sites

D. **Drivers and deal-breakers**

- Drivers: case studies, hassle-free ordering, dedicated support
- Deal-breakers: poor comms, low-spec materials, packaging failures

2.3 From Supplier to Specialist

When you niche:

- You can become “menu consultants” for restaurants instead of generic printers
- Or “digital pouch partners” for challenger FMCG brands
- Or the “on-demand label expert” for craft food and beverage

One hospitality-focused client repositioned from “we print menus” to:

“We create durable, waterproof menus that enhance your guests’ experience and last longer on the table.”

They increased prices by $\pm 25\%$ with the same physical product but a different story.



Customer Avatar example (AI generated)

Avatar Worksheet

Sector: _____

Role: _____

1. Top 3 pain points:

- _____
- _____
- _____

2. Top 3 things they want from a partner:

- _____
- _____
- _____

3. What “success” looks like for them:

- _____

4. Deal-breakers (hard no's):

- _____

3.Designing the Customer Value Journey

3.1 Why You Need a Journey

Most print businesses:

- Get on a prospect's radar
- Push for a quote
- Hope they come back

Colin's Customer Value Journey shows how a stranger becomes a loyal promoter:

1. Aware
2. Engage
3. Subscribe
4. Convert
5. Excite
6. Ascend
7. Advocate
8. Promote

Each stage needs deliberate touchpoints.

3.2 What It Looks Like in Print

- **Aware:** they see a LinkedIn post, webinar invite or trade show stand
- **Engage:** they read a blog or watch a plant tour video
- **Subscribe:** they sign up for your newsletter or download a guide
- **Convert:** they place a first “test” order or request samples
- **Excite:** you send a press photo, update and a thoughtful unboxing experience
- **Ascend:** you offer more SKUs, new formats, or better materials
- **Advocate:** they give a testimonial
- **Promote:** they refer other brands and tag you online

4. Content Marketing That Actually Works

4.1 The Role of Content

Your content should:

1. **Educate** – explain choices and trade-offs
2. **Engage** – spark conversation and interest
3. **Inspire** – show what's possible with stories and data
4. **Convert** – guide the next step clearly
5. **Retain** – keep existing customers close

4.2 Content Formats for Print Businesses

- Blog posts and articles
- Landing pages per sector or application
- Email newsletters
- Short-form videos and reels
- Lead magnets (guides, checklists, templates)
- Case studies and customer stories
- FAQ and “How to supply artwork” guides

4.3 Repurposing One Idea Many Ways

Example: a case study on digital pouches for a pet food brand.

Repurpose it into:

- A detailed blog post
- 3 LinkedIn posts (problem, process, result)
- 1 email to your database
- 1 short video with overlay text
- A 1-page PDF you attach to quotes

Blog

5 Packaging Design Trends to Watch in 2024



Jan 1, 2024

The packaging landscape is constantly evolving, with new design trends emerging each year. I'll explore five key trends set to shape packaging design in 2024.



Company | Marketing
th



John Doe
Marketing Manager

The packaging landscape is constantly evolving, with new design trends emerging each year. Check out this blog post to watch in 2024!
[#packagingdesign](#) [#trends](#)



5 Packaging Design Trends to Watch in 2024

The packaging landscape is constantly evolving, with new design trends emerging each year.

👍 27

💬 12

➦ Share

Repurposed Content Example (AI generated)

5. Content Marketing That Actually Works

5.1 Why It Matters

Social media is not just for selfies. It:

- Supports awareness, engagement, subscribe, convert, advocate and promote
- Humanises your brand (“people buy from people”)
- Amplifies your best stories through tags and shares

Colin’s whole coaching business runs largely on LinkedIn.

5.2 Choosing Platforms

- LinkedIn – essential for B2B print and packaging
- Instagram / TikTok – ideal for visual, consumer-facing applications (car decals, personal care, lifestyle packaging)
- Facebook – can work, but often draws more price-driven B2C buyers

Focus on one or two where your avatars are active.

5.3 What to Share

Think in three recurring content themes:

1. **Print That Performs**
 - ROI tips, smart uses of digital print, SKU management
2. **Behind the Scenes**
 - Press, finishing, QC, team culture, ordering portals
3. **Customer Success**
 - Short stories, quotes, mini-case studies, reposted client content

Aim for:

- ±80% value, education, stories
- ±20% direct promotion

3 Packaging Tips for FMCG Marketers

1. Emphasize sustainability
2. Maximize shelf impact
3. Adapt quickly to trends

Spotlight on Minimalist Design



The Rise of Smart Packaging

A look at the latest innovations and best practices in sustainable packaging for FMCG products

Inspiring Packaging Ideas from 3 Organic Brands



Is Digital Printing Right for Your Brand?

Sustainability in Packaging What's New in 2024

Sustainability in Packaging: What's New in 2024

A look at the latest innovations and best practices in sustainable packaging for FMCG

The Importance of Shelf Appeal

Design Inspiration: Bold Typography



6. Your 90-Day Action Plan

Month 1: Get Clear

- Pick one high-potential sector (e.g. personal care, pet food, pharma).
- Build a detailed customer avatar for that sector.
- Map their current Customer Value Journey with you and note gaps.

Month 2: Show Up

- Create one pillar content piece (case study, guide, webinar replay).
- Repurpose it into posts, one email, and a simple downloadable PDF.
- Commit to one meaningful LinkedIn post per week.

Month 3: Delight & Proof

- Add a simple Excite moment to every new order (press photo, video, note).
- Collect 3–5 testimonials or short case studies.
- Meet with Kemtek to explore where HP Indigo 200K / 6K Plus can support that sector.

Final Call to Action

You do not have to become a marketing agency overnight. You just need:

- A clearer picture of who you serve
- A simple journey that guides how you engage them
- Consistent content and social activity
- Technology that can deliver the transformation you promise

To explore how HP Indigo digital labels and flexible packaging, supported by Kemtek, can power that strategy, get in touch for a conversation, demo or plant visit.

For conversations, demos or plant visits, reach out to our team:

- **Email:** digitalprinting@kemtek.co.za
- **Phone:** +27 (0)11 624 8000
- **Website:** www.kemtek.co.za

Prefer a face to face? Ask your Kemtek account manager to set up a session with the HP Indigo team.

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