

Business Strategies for the Distributor Sales Professional

PRINT+PROMO

ENNIS



Top 50 Suppliers

Preparing for the Next Normal

Pictured, from left, Terry Pennington, vice president of sales; Wade Brewer, business unit director; Keith S. Walters, chairman, CEO and president; Kevin Johnston, business unit director; Steven Osterloh, vice president of marketing; and Steve Reifel, business unit director, Ennis Inc.

TOP 50 Suppliers: Analysis

Print+Promo's 2020 Top 50 Suppliers

Stats, trends and more

By Elise Hacking Carr

Just seven months ago, when Print+Promo released its annual State of the Industry Report, the conversation was different in its tone. Sure, there were whispers of a recession—will it or won't it happen? But, the overall outlook was positive. Andrew D. Paparozzi, chief economist for PRINTING United Alliance (then SGIA), Fairfax, Va., didn't see a clear risk of recession in 2020.

"Rather, recessions are caused by three factors: excesses, such as the real estate bubble prior to the Great Recession of 2008-09, or the dot-com bubble prior to the recession of 2001; policy errors, such as excessively tight monetary policy, poorly designed, timed and executed tax increases and innovation stifling-regulation; and exogenous shocks, such as the OPEC oil embargoes of the 1970s," he told Print+Promo in February.

Even better, by Paparozzi's estimates, total commercial printing industry sales (all sources, not just printing) for 2019 increased 1.7% to \$87.3 billion, finishing in line with the association's expectations, albeit at the lower half of the 1.5% to 2.5% range it had forecasted at the start of 2020.

Then, the coronavirus pandemic hit. Stay-at-home orders were issued, nonessential businesses abruptly shut down and positive cases skyrocketed. Who could've predicted this? And on top of it all, the country was dealing with what has shaped up to be one of the most contentious presidential elections in history.

Print+Promo had to make a choice: proceed with our 2020 Top 50 Suppliers list and hope people wanted to celebrate successes, or fill our pages with alternative content. As you can see, we made our decision, and we feel it was the right one. So, let's break down the facts.

According to our data, overall revenue for Top 50 submissions was \$2.47 billion, a slight increase over 2019's \$2.45 billion. Of the 42 suppliers returning from last year's Top 50:

- 21 had revenue increases.

- 19 had revenue decreases.
- 2 finished evenly.

Those who have been following our lists will find similarities among our top five, though there is one exception. Not to be outdone for a second consecutive year, TST IMPRESO Inc. knocked Western States Envelope and Label Co. out of fifth place by nearly \$12 million. Keith S. Walters-led Ennis Inc. held onto the No. 1 spot, earning \$438.4 million—up by 9.4%, thanks to the 2019 purchases of Flesh Co and Integrated Print & Graphics.

The 2020 list was missing some notable entries, starting with Outlook Group, a trade printer that most recently placed ninth on our 2019 list with \$68 million in annual sales. Other missing suppliers were the previously announced Flesh Co (2019: No. 21); Gabriel Group (2019: No. 23); Pro Document Solutions (2019: No. 39); McCourt Label Company (2019: No. 40); Bollin Label Systems (2019: No. 41); Thompson Print & Mailing Solutions (2019: No. 42); and Bestforms Inc. (2019: No. 47), which, as of June 2020, became part of the PDF Print Communications Inc. family. While their absence was felt (collectively, those companies earned \$170.2 million), it created room for eight new companies, including a first-time submitter who made the top 10. Also of note, the newcomers' combined total was \$197.4 million, so we gained roughly \$27.2 million even with the loss of those just mentioned. Say "hello" to Showdown Displays (No. 7); Britten Inc. (No. 20); StickerYou Inc. (No. 34); Tranter Graphics Inc. (No. 40); CFC Print & Mail (No. 47); Total Printing Systems (No. 48); Ignite Graphics LLC (No. 49); and Phoenix Data Inc. (No. 50).

Individual product sectors were a mixed bag. Signs/Displays/Wide Format underwent an explosive 173.6% growth, reaching \$192.9 million (2019: \$70.5 million). There are two possible explanations. First, there's the addition of a company like Showdown Displays.

TOP 10 FASTEST-GROWING SUPPLIERS

Twenty-one of our Top 50 Suppliers had revenue increases this time around. The following list showcases 10 of those companies. Sales are based on the most recent fiscal year completed.

1. PDF Print Communications Inc.

Signal Hill, CA
2020 List: \$22,515,000
2019 List: \$19,100,500
Growth: 17.9%

2. TST IMPRESO Inc.

Coppell, TX
2020 List: \$115,265,459
2019 List: \$101,331,030
Growth: 13.8%

3. Stouse LLC

New Century, KS
2020 List: \$60,647,669
2019 List: \$54,300,000
Growth: 11.7%

4. MAR

Valmeyer, IL
2020 List: \$17,533,900

2019 List: \$15,980,000
Growth: 9.7%

5. Ennis Inc.

Midlothian, TX
2020 List: \$438,412,000
2019 List: \$400,782,000
Growth: 9.4%

6. TLF Graphics Inc.

Rochester, NY
2020 List: \$21,701,342
2019 List: \$20,272,000
Growth: 7.1%

7. Bradley Graphic Solutions Inc.

Bensalem, PA
2020 List: \$11,200,000
2019 List: \$10,500,000
Growth: 6.7%

8. 4over LLC

Glendale, CA
2020 List: \$282,500,000
2019 List: \$270,000,000
Growth: 4.6%

9. Luminer Converting Group

Lakewood, NJ
2020 List: \$14,000,000
2019 List: \$13,500,000
Growth: 3.7%

10. Repacorp Inc.

Tipp City, OH
2020 List: \$45,597,000
2019 List: \$44,000,000
Growth: 3.6%

Photo: Getty Images by jayk7

Second, it's no secret that safety and COVID-related signage are in high demand, as state governors give the green light for businesses to reopen, with modifications. Well, those businesses need to get the message out.

Promotional Products rebounded this year, clocking in at \$225.4 million (2019: \$201.2 million)—a 12.1% increase over 2019 figures. Printed Forms continued its upward trend, moving to \$420.5 million (2019: \$406.1 million). Rounding out the improved section with \$305.6 million is the "Other" category, up 24.5% from 2019's \$245.6 million.

Our four remaining categories didn't fare as well. Commercial Print, consisting of marketing pieces, catalogs, brochures, presentation folders, envelopes, stationery and business cards, still managed to produce the highest sales volume at \$676.9 million; however, this is down from 2019's \$705.7 million. Labels & Tags accounted for \$507.6 million (2019: \$574.2 million). Direct Mail fell to \$109.0 million (2019: \$142.7 million). And, Plastic Products/Cards dropped to \$25.9 million (2019: \$26.4 million). Note that not all companies chose to disclose their revenue totals for individual products categories, which could skew the numbers.

For the complete analysis and interviews with the leading executives of four of our top-ranked companies, turn to page 20.

We congratulate each company that made the list and wish everyone the best of luck and, more importantly, good health in 2021. Check back in November to see how the distributors fared. ■

(Editor's note: Factors to consider when interpreting sales figures are ongoing industry consolidations and responses reporting idiosyncrasies.)

OTHER STATS

- Four out of the five top companies enjoyed revenue increases. TST IMPRESO Inc.'s 13.8% rise in sales was the biggest increase.
- In all, 18 U.S. states and one Canadian province (Ontario) were headquarters to at least one Top 50 supplier. Illinois led the way with 10 suppliers calling it home, while Ohio had five. Eight other states appeared at least two times on the list, leaving eight states with a single supplier.
- This year's Top 50 suppliers employed more than 12,000 people at 246 locations (data includes some, but not all, parent company headcounts and subsidiary or division locations). The highest employee count for any one Top 50 supplier was 2,500; the lowest was 29. Six Top 50 suppliers had 500 or more employees, and 27 companies had fewer than 100 employees.
- Of the 51 principal officers listed for the Top 50 Suppliers (one company listed more than one principal), 47 were men and four were women.

TOP 50 Suppliers

	COMPANY	REVENUE	PRINCIPAL(S)	LOCATION
1	Ennis Inc.* (see page 24)	\$438,412,000	Keith S. Walters, Chairman/ CEO/President	Midlothian, TX
2	4over LLC	\$282,500,000	Shaheen Javadizadeh, CEO	Glendale, CA
3	OneTouchPoint	\$138,649,000	David Holland, CEO	Hartland, WI
4	Magnets 4 media (Parent Company: The Magnet Group)	\$121,437,000	Bill Korowitz, CEO	Washington, MO
5	TST IMPRESO Inc.	\$115,265,459	Marshall Sorokwasz, CEO	Coppell, TX
6	Western States Envelope and Label Co.	\$103,258,833	Steve Bayerlein, CEO	Butler, WI
7	Showdown Displays	\$103,000,000	John Bruellman, CEO	Brooklyn Center, MN
8	Discount Labels (Parent Company: Cenveo)	\$76,000,000	Andy Johnson, President	New Albany, IN
9	Zoo Printing	\$65,000,000	Erica Anderson, General Manager	Valencia, CA
10	Diversified Labeling Solutions Inc. (Parent Company: TSC Auto ID Technology)	\$64,432,162	Jim Kersten, CEO	Itasca, IL
11	ADG Promotional Products (Parent Company: Taylor Corporation)	\$63,100,000	Tom Donlin, National Sales Manager	White Bear Lake, MN
12	Stouse LLC	\$60,647,669	Clay Davis, CEO/President	New Century, KS
13	BCT	\$60,058,000	Bruce Mars, President	Fort Lauderdale, FL
14	I.D. Images LLC	\$58,500,000	Brian D. Gale, CEO/President	Brunswick, OH
15	Ward-Kraft Inc.	\$56,300,000	Roger Kraft, Owner	Fort Scott, KS
16	Gill Studios Inc.	\$54,250,000	Donald A. Gill, Chairman of the Board	Lenexa, KS
17	KDM Products	\$46,000,000	Larry Newman, President	Carpentersville, IL
18	Repacorp Inc.	\$45,597,000	Rick Heinl, CEO	Tipp City, OH

TOP 50 Suppliers

	COMPANY	REVENUE	PRINCIPAL(S)	LOCATION
19	InfoSeal/New Jersey Business Forms/Hampshire Label	\$40,000,000	Andrew Harnett, Owner; David Harnett, Owner	Roanoke, VA
20	Britten Inc.† (see page 24)	\$39,000,000	Paul Britten, President	Traverse City, MI
21	Envelope Mart USA	\$25,000,000	Norm Shapiro, President	Northwood, OH
22	The Label Printers	\$23,000,000	William Kane, Chief Executive	Aurora, IL
23	PDF Print Communications Inc.	\$22,515,000	Kevin Mullaney, CEO/President	Signal Hill, CA
24	TLF Graphics Inc.	\$21,701,342	Robert McJury, Partner/ Vice President of Sales	Rochester, NY
25	Design Distributors Inc.‡ (see page 24)	\$20,000,000	Adam Avrick, President	Deer Park, NY
26	Team Concept Printing	\$19,245,000	Anthony Rouse, CEO/President	Carol Stream, IL
27	ID Label Inc.	\$18,600,000	Neil Johnston, CEO/President	Lake Villa, IL
28	MAR	\$17,533,900	Rick Roever, President	Valmeyer, IL
29	Data Papers Inc.	\$17,360,000	Jerry Wertz, CEO/President	Muncy, PA
30	CE Printed Products Inc.	\$16,932,815	Robert Ohr, CEO	Carol Stream, IL
31	Maggio Data Forms	\$16,900,000	Robert Maggio, President	Hauppauge, NY
32	HCF Inc.	\$15,190,000	Steve Patton, President	Hillsboro, OH
33	AmeriCAL Labels & Stickers	\$15,038,000	John C. Peterson, President	Omaha, NE
34	StickerYou Inc.	\$15,000,000	Andrew Witkin, CEO	Toronto, ON, Canada
35	UMC Print	\$14,500,000	Shawn Boyd, President	Overland Park, KS
36	Graphic Dimensions/ New Dimension Labels	\$14,100,000	Jay Scammell, President	Austell, GA
37	Luminer Converting Group	\$14,000,000	Thomas Spina, CEO/President	Lakewood, NJ

TOP 50 Suppliers

	COMPANY	REVENUE	PRINCIPAL(S)	LOCATION
38	Labels West Inc.	\$12,159,419	John Shanley, President	Woodinville, WA
39	Bradley Graphic Solutions Inc.	\$11,200,000	Robert J. Bradley, President	Bensalem, PA
40	Tranter Graphics Inc.	\$11,000,000	Tammy Tranter, CEO/President	Syracuse, IN
41	Royal	\$10,562,000	Tim Urness, Owner/President	Brooklyn Park, MN
42	QT2	\$9,457,000	Mike Daughenbaugh, Vice President	Tiffin, OH
43	BCSI	\$9,172,017	James Marchessault, President	Burnsville, MN
44	ASAP Printing	\$9,000,000	Christopher McKim, Brand Manager	Arlington, TX
45	5 Day Business Forms	\$8,957,898	Les Messick, President	Anaheim, CA
46	AmeriPrint Corporation	\$8,400,000	Vicky Schulty, President	Harvard, IL
47	CFC Print & Mail	\$7,959,699	Tommy Gillis, Managing Partner	Grand Prairie, TX
48	Total Printing Systems	\$7,529,874	Rick Lindemann, President	Newton, IL
49	Ignite Graphics LLC	\$7,120,442	Sharon Luka, CEO	Elmhurst, IL
50	Phoenix Data Inc.	\$6,788,500	Larry B. Lovell, Owner/President	Montgomery, PA

*Includes sales of 360° Custom Labels, Adams McClure, Admore, Ad Concepts, Atlas Tag & Label, B&D Litho of Arizona, Block Graphics, Calibrated, ColorWorx, Enfusion, Ennis Inc., Falcon Business Forms, Flesh Co, Folder Express, Forms Manufacturers Inc. (FMI), FormSource Limited, GenForms, General Financial Supply, Hayes Graphics, Hoosier Data Forms, Impressions Direct, Independent Printing, Integrated Print & Graphics, Kay Toledo Tag, Major Business Systems Inc., Mutual Graphics, National Imprint Corporation (NIC), Northstar, Printegra, Printgraphics, PrintXcel, Royal Business Forms, Special Service Partners (SSP), Specialized Printed Forms, Star Award Ribbon Company, Trade Envelopes, Tri-C Business Forms, Uncompromised Check Solutions, VersaSeal, Wisco Envelope, Witt Printing Company and Wright Business Graphics.

†Includes sales of Britten Banners Inc., Britten Woodworks, BOXPOP Containers and Britten Foam Props.

‡Includes sales of PFC and Greenlight Envelope.

TOP 10 Forms Suppliers

	COMPANY	FORMS REVENUE	TOTAL REVENUE	LOCATION
1	Ennis Inc.	\$206,053,640	\$438,412,000	Midlothian, TX
2	InfoSeal/NJBF/Hampshire Label	\$34,000,000	\$40,000,000	Roanoke, VA
3	Ward-Kraft Inc.	\$20,831,000	\$56,300,000	Fort Scott, KS
4	KDM Products	\$20,700,000	\$46,000,000	Carpentersville, IL
5	PDF Print Communications Inc.	\$20,263,500	\$22,515,000	Signal Hill, CA
6	TST IMPRESO INC.	\$17,289,819	\$115,265,459	Coppell, TX
7	Maggio Data Forms	\$13,520,000	\$16,900,000	Hauppauge, NY
8	HCF Inc.	\$12,911,500	\$15,190,000	Hillsboro, OH
9	Graphic Dimensions/New Dimension Labels	\$9,870,000	\$14,100,000	Austell, GA
10	Royal	\$8,977,700	\$10,562,000	Brooklyn Park, MN

TOP 10 Labels & Tags Suppliers

	COMPANY	LABELS & TAGS REVENUE	TOTAL REVENUE	LOCATION
1	Ennis Inc.	\$74,530,040	\$438,412,000	Midlothian, TX
2	Discount Labels	\$68,400,000	\$76,000,000	New Albany, IN
3	Diversified Labeling Solutions Inc.	\$64,432,162	\$64,432,162	Itasca, IL
4	I.D. Images LLC	\$52,650,000	\$58,500,000	Brunswick, OH
5	Repacorp Inc.	\$44,229,090	\$45,597,000	Tipp City, OH
6	Gill Studios Inc.	\$35,805,000	\$54,250,000	Lenexa, KS
7	Ward-Kraft Inc.	\$23,646,000	\$56,300,000	Fort Scott, KS
8	The Label Printers	\$21,850,000	\$23,000,000	Aurora, IL
9	TLF Graphics Inc.	\$18,446,141	\$21,701,342	Rochester, NY
10	ID Label Inc.	\$15,996,000	\$18,600,000	Lake Villa, IL

Top 10 Commercial Print Suppliers

	COMPANY	COMMERCIAL PRINT REVENUE	TOTAL REVENUE	LOCATION
1	4over LLC	\$220,350,000	\$282,500,000	Glendale, CA
2	Western States Envelope and Label Co.	\$92,932,950	\$103,258,833	Butler, WI
3	Ennis Inc.	\$87,682,400	\$438,412,000	Midlothian, TX
4	OneTouchPoint	\$83,189,400	\$138,649,000	Hartland, WI
5	Zoo Printing	\$57,525,000	\$65,000,000	Valencia, CA
6	BCT	\$54,052,200	\$60,058,000	Fort Lauderdale, FL
7	CE Printed Products Inc.	\$16,932,815	\$16,932,815	Carol Stream, IL
8	Team Concept Printing	\$11,931,900	\$19,245,000	Carol Stream, IL
9	UMC Print	\$10,150,000	\$14,500,000	Overland Park, KS
10	BCSI	\$9,172,017	\$9,172,017	Burnsville, MN

Top 10 Direct Mail Suppliers

	COMPANY	DIRECT MAIL REVENUE	TOTAL REVENUE	LOCATION
1	4over LLC	\$18,362,500	\$282,500,000	Glendale, CA
2	Ennis Inc.	\$17,536,480	\$438,412,000	Midlothian, TX
3	MAR	\$14,027,120	\$17,533,900	Valmeyer, IL
4	Design Distributors Inc.	\$14,000,000	\$20,000,000	Deer Park, NY
5	OneTouchPoint	\$13,864,900	\$138,649,000	Hartland, WI
6	Bradley Graphic Solutions Inc.	\$8,960,000	\$11,200,000	Bensalem, PA
7	Magnets 4 media	\$6,071,850	\$121,437,000	Washington, MO
8	Team Concept Printing	\$3,271,650	\$19,245,000	Carol Stream, IL
9	Data Papers Inc.	\$2,777,600	\$17,360,000	Muncy, PA
10	InfoSeal/NJBF/Hampshire Label	\$2,000,000	\$40,000,000	Roanoke, VA

Top 50 Suppliers: Interviews

What Unites Us

How today's print leaders are looking to the future

By Elise Hacking Carr

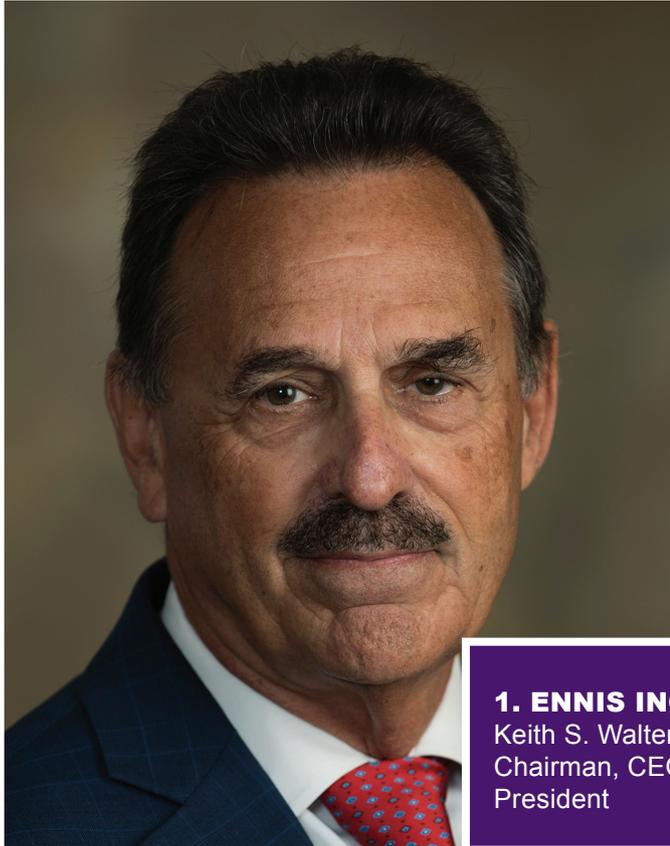
By the fourth quarter, C-suite executives have finalized their goals for the year ahead. But for the first time in our lives, we can't predict much of anything. In fact, "I just don't know" now completes the trifecta of 2020 corporate speak that already includes "pivot" and "unprecedented." When the first wave of coronavirus cases crashed into the U.S., businesses across all industries took drastic measures to preserve jobs and keep doors open as state governors enforced stay-at-home orders. Some were successful; others were not as fortunate.

Throughout this uncertainty, printers have kept the presses running. Part of a critical infrastructure industry as defined by the Department of Homeland Security, these professionals play a crucial role in protecting the nation's food, medical and health care supply chains, to name a few. That being said, hard decisions surrounding salary cuts, furloughs and permanent layoffs still affected members of our community.

Leaders are human, forced to grieve lost routines, social connections, family structure and a sense of security like the rest of us. On the other hand, they are paid to provide assurances, direction, hope and actionable information. While we don't know what's next, we do know leaders are only as good as their employees. When interviewing the principals of the top-ranked companies listed in Print+Promo's 2020 Top 50 Suppliers chart, there was a common theme of empathy throughout the discussions. In fact, several of these executives cited employee well-being and safety as their primary concerns, and were most proud of meeting those needs. They also acknowledged that any wins were the result of an incredible team effort.

In the following section, we'll get to know more about the men behind our top four suppliers. Find out how they inspire others, what they've learned from adversity and where they're headed.

Top 50 Suppliers: Interviews



1. ENNIS INC.
Keith S. Walters,
Chairman, CEO and
President

What was your company's biggest accomplishment over the last year?

KSW: This year has been difficult for our country, our customers and our employees with the lockdowns, changes in the business environment, stress, and the (fortunately rare) COVID infection. Our biggest accomplishments would be our employees managing the business to remain profitable at a lower sales volume. The second most important is, as an essential business, keeping all of our locations open. Our customers and their customers rely on Ennis to produce medical, food, manufacturing, distribution and other essential items that were still in high demand during the early days and throughout the pandemic. Additionally, there are thousands of Ennis employees that were able to keep earning their paychecks, allowing them to support their families and communities.

How is your company positioning itself to stand out in 2021?

KSW: Our plants have used this time to focus on new product development, discovering new reseller channels for our products and educating our customers on the wide variety of capabilities available through Ennis.

How has the coronavirus pandemic affected your acquisition strategy? Have you paused any deals, and, if so, when do you anticipate M&As picking up again?

KSW: It is rare that we don't have an acquisition opportunity that is being worked on. Not all of them end up with a deal in the end.

During the pandemic, we've been working several opportunities, but we've also learned over the years that entrepreneurial owners don't typically want to sell their businesses during a downturn when the volume of their business might be depressed.

You have always maintained that a strong balance sheet and strong free-cash flow position contribute to Ennis' successful run. How has this helped in 2020, in particular? Has much changed since your official statement in June regarding the company's Q1 financial results?

KSW: Our balance sheet remains strong. Ennis did not apply for or accept any government assistance, and we did not have to access our bank credit facility during this difficult time. The hard work by our employees and the loyalty of our customers have allowed us to remain strong, and our cash position for the recently ended quarter is better than the prior year's results.

What is the biggest professional risk you've ever taken?

KSW: It would have to be taking the job at Ennis. At the time I joined Ennis, the perception of the company was low, the financial position wasn't strong and the board of directors was in disarray. The risk paid off as Ennis recommitted themselves to the distributor market as the industry shifted from the quick printer and major directs. The returns of the last 20-plus years have brought significant value to the shareholders of the company.

What is the greatest lesson that 2020 has taught you?

KSW: I've always thought we've had the best systems, but being challenged by the pandemic made it clear that we do. Our general managers have done an excellent job in reading and understanding what the systems are telling them about their businesses. They are making the necessary changes at the right times, which has allowed us to remain profitable during this difficult year.

How are you decompressing during these unprecedented times?

KSW: During these more difficult times is when you are needed more, not less. Honestly, I don't find work stressful. I find it challenging, and this is where I want to be.

Is there anything you would like to add to give our readers a better sense of your business approach and the industry at large?

KSW: With more than 50 locations across the U.S. and a wide range of product lines, costs to produce a product and what we can make on the sale varies widely. At Ennis, we preach that each location will be judged by their potential and how close they come to meeting that potential. Plant A may make more money than plant B, but that doesn't mean that the management team running plant B didn't do a better job than plant A. By focusing on the potential of an operation, you give the team realistic goals that, with hard work, can be achieved.

Top 50 Suppliers: Interviews



2. 4OVER LLC
Shaheen Javadizadeh,
CEO

Please tell us a little bit about yourself. What is your professional background and when did you assume the CEO position at 4over?

Shaheen Javadizadeh: I joined 4over in July of this year, so right in the middle of the summer, and I immediately assumed the role of CEO. I had been following the company and working with the board kind of through the pandemic period of time, so I was very familiar with what I was stepping into and the task at hand. My background is actually not in print; my background is in business-to-business software, so for 21 years, I have run and operated successful B2B software companies that focus on automation, focus on business process, focus on serving customers better across a myriad of industries. And, in my career, what I've always focused on—is the same combination that we'll be focusing on here at 4over—is [to] focus on employees, focus on customers and then focus on technology, which might sound odd coming from a technology background. But, the way I view and the way I've been successful in my career is always focusing and growing our employees because they're going to focus and service our customers, and they're going to innovate and build the best technology that supports those customers, so that we can be better than our competition. And so, 4over has been a company that has focused on technology very early on. Technology is really what's driven its growth, and so although I don't have a print background, I have a really solid technology background in leading large teams, and so it was actually a very nice fit.

What was your company's biggest accomplishment over the last year?

SJ: I think the biggest accomplishment over this year is a focus on our employees. So, when we were at the peak of the pandemic, we were not

required to by any government (state government or federal government), but we voluntarily shut down and temporarily shut down about three quarters of our capacity to make sure that we could step back and have the proper protocols in place for our employees to keep them safe and that we had the right sanitary environments from a cleaning perspective. We had our vendors lined up [so] that we could space our teams to keep them safe and figure out how do we return back to capacity in a very thoughtful way that protects our customers? Because, ultimately, that was what's going to drive us to return back to the market and serve our customers best.

And so, during that time period, our on-time rates dropped—and they've never dropped in the history of the company, but we wanted to make sure that we could come out of the peak much stronger than our competitors, and so we've been back to 99.x return time and our late jobs [have been] less than 1% for many months now. And I think that is really attributed to the thoughtful approach that we took to make sure that our customers are serviced by making sure our employees are available, healthy and able to serve them. We didn't have a playbook for the pandemic, but we developed one very quickly. Getting back to being reliable, being fast is what 4over has been known for and so we had to take a pause. And it was a scary, risky thing for us to do to make sure we could get back there as quickly as possible and in the safest possible way.

How is your company positioning itself to stand out in 2021?

SJ: During the pandemic when you think, "Hey, we're just focused on one thing: returning to business, returning to service," but what it does allow you to do is really step back and assess the business and think through the future, right? Like we had this unprecedented, unexpected event happen that turned the industry and our company on its head, and it forced us to step back and look at what we could be doing better. Where should we be headed, and how do we get there? And so, we actually launched an incredible investment. We're spending millions of dollars right now on our customer experience program. We're revamping our ordering process, we're revamping order status, we're revamping our delivery capabilities and we're testing this with some of our key customers. So, our early feedback from key customers is really encouraging. They're partnering with us to help us become a bigger, stronger 4over as we enter 2021.

So, we're going to be launching a brand new, game-changing face to the company on how we help our customers be successful, so that, ultimately, they can be successful with their customers. And we're going to launch that in Q1 of 2021, so we have a big taskforce and team working with customers right now to innovate on new technologies, on new front-end systems, new back-end ordering status [and] new logistics capabilities to make sure that product gets to their end-customer when they need it and when we say and when we promise it. It's a big opportunity for us to leapfrog competition, just provide a better level of service to the industry. As you may know, 4over is a trade-only company, so we don't do any B2C, so we have a higher standard in which to provide transparency to our customer because, at the end of the day, if we're not executing, their phone is ringing from their customer. And we want to make those instances minimal, and we want to make sure that our customer has the best possible transparency and support throughout the ordering process and delivery process.

Top 50 Suppliers: Interviews

How has the COVID-19 climate impacted 4over?

SJ: As volume dropped as we closed plants, we did have to furlough some employees. Simply put, we needed them to be at home and to be safe and so that we could bring them back to work as quickly as possible. So, we did step back, we furloughed some of the staff while we figured out how to get back and return to service so that our employees could get back to work and we can start being on time for our customers as quickly as possible.

I will tell you during this time, as I mentioned, one of the things [we did] was an investment in customer experience, but it also allowed our teams and our plant managers to look at the floor and look at our machinery and look at opportunities to improve. Because as volume is going through and as you're managing 20,000 orders a day, it's hard to step back and look at how do we improve, how do we make this more efficient, how do we lean out our processes? So, it was actually a great opportunity for our teams to step back and continue to innovate. Our organization historically has been on the cutting edge—if not the leading edge—of technology, so we work with our manufacturing partners that build incredible equipment, and our teams actually go and modify that equipment. We fabricate new features into that equipment and then we work back with our partners who manufacture that equipment and, ultimately, some of that innovation that we put into the equipment makes it into the mainstream product where our competition benefits and so the overall market benefits, and you'd say, "Geez, why would you do that?" But the reality is, it puts us ahead and it makes us better, and so this was just a great opportunity. We had some great innovations that I think you're going to see come out in the marketplace that don't just do things like increase speed and reliability, but new finishings and new products that we're able to come out to the market that you're going to start seeing soon as we launch our new customer-facing portals and websites, so that was a great opportunity.

From a product category perspective, there was a shift, right? So, there were some things that make a ton of sense, you know, trade shows were down and people aren't going to trade shows, so print associated with trade shows just dropped off, but then other categories picked up. Rigid signs and banners, you know. Not only are we in an election season, where rigid signs always pop up, but where I live here in California and in Nevada, I've noticed that every restaurant has a banner and they never had banners before. Every retail store has a banner. And so, we've seen banner business pick up. We've also seen the EDDM business, so the Every Door Direct Mailer business pick up as businesses are trying to advertise. Where one portion of the business has declined, another portion of the business has offset that by growing at a rapid pace. Luckily, we have that capability to scale and shift, and we've got really talented team members that are able to operate and continue to be on time. I'd say one of the most surprising things about the product categories that I did not expect is under our business card category. I expected that as people are not meeting face-to-face for business, as unemployment numbers are surging, that the business card category—I was expecting it to just completely drop out, and that has not been the case. Our business card business has stayed, you know, it has a dip, but it has stayed incredibly strong. The dip is surprisingly low on a year-over-year basis.

What is the biggest professional risk you've ever taken?

SJ: Actually, I would say joining 4over. I've been in technology my entire life. I have a finance background. I don't have a technology background, but I've always been inquisitive. I've always wanted to know how things work and how to make them better, and I really need to understand the "why." I'm the person who asks "why?" five times since I have two 9-year-old kids, and they're always asking me "why?" and "what?", but I think they've learned that from me. I ingrained that in their DNA, maybe, but I'm not sure. I have such a fantastic board, so [former CEO] Zarik Megerdichian, you know, I look at him as the godfather of this industry of trade printing, and he is just so open and warm and sharing. And he's technology-focused, so we speak the same language. When we have our discussions, it's about operational efficiency, it's about technology, it's about putting the customer in the center and designing around the experience that we want to give them. And Zarik is such a great partner that even though it was a big risk for me to step [outside] of technology, a major portion of this business is technology, and I have such a great partner [in] Zarik.

Knowing what you do today about leading, what advice would you give to your past self?

SJ: Don't assume anything in the future. You've got to plan for the unknown. Nobody would've known that we were going to hit this pandemic other than Bill Gates, perhaps. But other than that, don't get comfortable with the status quo.

The other thing here is build out distributed teams. There's always been a culture of "Geez, people need to be in the office, to see them and know that they're working"; in high tech, that's not the case, right? In high tech, where I come from, we're used to having distributed teams. And so, building out your employee base where they can work from home or they can work in different cities—one, it creates better employee morale, and two, it builds resiliency in business continuity planning and to the business should there be something like a pandemic or some type of natural disaster. It's key to really double down on those efforts to make sure that whatever comes our way next, the team is ready and prepared for that and it's not disruptive to them or to the business or to our customers.

What is the greatest lesson that 2020 has taught you?

SJ: It's really focusing on resiliency, focusing on your team and just being ready to, you know—maybe the only thing I can add to that is building a culture that is ready to be nimble and ready to pivot, and celebrating that capability across the team, and training and enabling that capability.

How are you decompressing during these unprecedented times?

SJ: I'm an early morning person. I wake up at 4:30 a.m. or 5 a.m. every morning. I like to read a ton and be ahead of operations opening up. Obviously, we have our east coast operations, so I get to actually communicate with the East and start following the time zones back.

But when I'm not working and learning and helping the employees in the organization, you know, I have a fantastic wife and two twin boys that are 9 years old, and a 15-year-old dog that we love dearly (he's our first son). We actually live in San Diego and in Lake Tahoe, so I travel quite

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a bit to Glendale—that's where I'm working out of—but we get the best of both worlds. We get the beach and the sun and the great weather on one hand, and we get the mountains and skiing and great family time in Lake Tahoe. And so, really, spending time with family and watching the kids grow and helping them become great human beings and citizens of the world.

Is there anything you would like to add to give our readers a better sense of your business approach and the industry at large?

SJ: The multitrillion-dollar question is when will the pandemic be over? What will the impact be to the market and the economy? And, nobody knows, right? We can all guess. But, it will get better and it will return. Is that 12 months? Is that 24 months? Nobody really knows. But when it does, the key is helping your employees, focusing on your customers, pivot and survive, and position, just as we're positioning 4over to be bigger, stronger and better, [we're] helping our customers do that. I would just say as heavy as times may seem, be optimistic. Look for opportunities. Things are going to get better. Things are going to change. We're already starting to see it in our numbers, which we think are representative obviously to our customers, but hopefully to [the] market in whole and the economy in whole. We're very optimistic for the future. We're very optimistic for the future of the market. We're very optimistic for the future of the economy and the country, and our global economy as well.



3. ONETOUCHPOINT
David Holland, CEO

What was your company's biggest accomplishment over the last year?

David Holland: I think our biggest accomplishment may be how well our team has handled the COVID-19 crisis, quite frankly. We were deemed an essential business very early in the pandemic, and while navigating multiple state and city mandates, working to keep our employees, partners and clients healthy, instituting new procedures, and juggling work schedules, we had to remain maniacally focused

on delivering for our clients who were themselves struggling to pivot and reset priorities in response to their own business challenges. Our teams stepped up, got creative, put in the time needed and continued to deliver for our clients. In fact, we recently completed our annual Voice of the Customer survey and our Net Promoter Score ("would you recommend us?") improved from a 77 to an 85, which put us even higher in the "exceptional" category. I'd say that's a huge accomplishment. I am very proud of that.

In early February, we also finalized the acquisition of a digital marketing agency that specializes in local marketing for distributed marketing teams and multi-unit organizations. We added new digital capabilities, robust brand management technology and a dedicated team of highly skilled local marketing experts who bring more than 20 years of experience. These new additions round out our end-to-end, integrated marketing solutions, which allow our clients across various industries to easily manage complex, cross-channel engagement strategies, including branded asset management, digital marketing execution, traditional print, mail and signage—all through one vendor. This is what our customers are looking for—to have the highest customer impact, while reducing the cost and complexity and their marketing engagements.

As a follow up, did you pause 2020 plans for expanding your multichannel local marketing capabilities in light of the coronavirus? How have the verticals you serve been affected?

DH: We did not pause our plans for expanding our multichannel local marketing capabilities. Since integrating the acquisition mentioned above at the beginning of February, a lot has changed, to be sure. Many in the franchise/multi-unit sector have suffered and are only just slowly starting to restart marketing efforts, but as the "new normal" began to evolve, true to our deep customer service focus, we worked to help our customers pivot to respond to changing requirements—from creating signage kits for franchises, distance learning packets for school districts, designing desk shields to help schools make plans to safely reopen, getting takeout and delivery information and offers out via EDDM programs, to amping up the local digital marketing presence for businesses who were not sure how to get in front of potential customers who were now staying home and spending more time online.

Our manufacturing, health care and financial services clients were also affected, of course. Discretionary programs and big marketing campaigns were paused, in-person events were cancelled, and employees were furloughed or sent home to work, making even day-to-day contact a challenge.

Businesses in these sectors have also realized the importance of engaging with clients across all brand channels, particularly now that social distancing and digital engagements have become the norm. It's no longer a "nice to have." Competing online has become mission critical.

How is your company positioning itself to stand out in 2021?

DH: We continue to execute against our strategy of building technology-enabled solutions that solve real market needs. Our clients are

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looking to reduce complexity and save costs, but they also have aggressive revenue goals to meet. With our end-to-end capabilities, we can support both sides of their business: We help them simplify their marketing supply chain and gain efficiencies and drive incremental revenues through multichannel marketing effectiveness—digital and physical—all under one roof.

To support these efforts, we continue to acquire and build the right people, processes and technologies—both via acquisition and organically. We are working directly with our clients to make sure that our solutions are streamlined, intuitive and solve their most pressing needs.

How has the COVID-19 climate impacted OneTouchPoint?

DH: When the pandemic hit and we started talking to our clients and learned of budgets stalling and projects being delayed, we realized we were going to need to make quick changes. We slowed discretionary spending and put bigger projects on hold where we could. In spite of our essential business status, we did have to temporarily and, in some cases, permanently furlough team members. This is, of course, something you never want to have to do. Through it all, our teams stepped up and continued to deliver for our clients.

We had—and still have—a lot of COVID-related projects. We were responsible for getting ventilator manuals in the hands of folks on the front lines, we sourced PPE supplies for many clients so they could keep their employees safe while they continued to serve as essential businesses, we worked with school districts on distanced learning packets for children who didn't have access to the internet, we designed student desk and cashier shields, and countless floor and wall graphics of COVID and CDC-related materials. We launched a "digital starter kit" offer for customers who needed to increase their presence online, and we waived our platform fee for our newly launched EDDM module so clients could quickly and effectively get updated dine-in and delivery information and new offers in front of local customers.

How do you motivate and inspire teams to achieve big goals, especially when things feel so heavy right now?

DH: We try to focus on transparency and communication. I think teams react more positively when they understand the whole scope of what is happening across a company, so they understand where leadership is focused and the role they themselves play and the difference they can make. The pandemic created a lot of uncertainty, especially at first when no one knew exactly what was going to happen and we were all worried about friends, families and loved ones. It was hard to stay focused on work. We addressed it as best we could, as directly as we could. We let our team know that we didn't have all of the answers. We didn't know what was going to happen either, but the best we all could do was to keep showing up every day, doing our best and asking for help if we needed it. We also continued our quarterly "Make a Difference" award program where employees nominate their peers who exemplify our core values or go above and



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— DAVID HOLLAND, CEO, ONETOUCHPOINT



beyond in their roles. It's been really great to be able to tell those stories internally and remind everyone of the amazingly talented team we get to work with.

What is the biggest professional risk you've ever taken?

DH: Standing alone in the belief of a winning strategy when others followed blind leadership for the sake of a paycheck. Your reputation is worth more than money.

Knowing what you do today about leading, what advice would you give to your past self?

DH: Don't sweat the small stuff and keep focused on the strategy. Hire great people and let them do the work you hired them to do.

What is the greatest lesson that 2020 has taught you?

DH: I learned that it's important to focus on the friendships you've forged inside and outside of business, and that your family and health are life's greatest assets.

How are you decompressing during these unprecedented times?

DH: I turn off the news, cook, exercise, read, watch comedy and spend time with those closest to me.

Is there anything you would like to add to give our readers a better sense of your business approach and the industry at large?

DH: The best of times are ahead of us, but only the most capable captains can navigate troubled waters. As an industry, we need to find a way to attract great, young talent to help with the unprecedented business transition ahead of us.

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4. Magnets 4 media
Bill Korowitz, CEO

What was your company's biggest accomplishment over the last year?

BK: Managing through the COVID minefield. [We have been staying] focused on serving customers instead of what was happening with COVID around us.

How is your company positioning itself to stand out in 2021?

BK: [We are] continually trying to do our best for our customers. We have always emphasized customer service, and that will continue to be a cornerstone platform for us in 2021.

How has the COVID-19 climate impacted Magnets 4 media?

BK: Once you realize all business is reliant on change, and on change to succeed or breed new ideas, it makes it a lot easier to think about the future.

How do you motivate and inspire teams to achieve big goals, especially when things feel so heavy right now?

BK: We are continuing to keep the client as the center of our uni-

verse, the reason for doing what we do. If you don't serve the client, you better be serving someone who is—that's our mantra.

What is the biggest professional risk you've ever taken?

BK: The biggest risk I have taken professionally is to rename the [parent] company [to] "The Magnet Group" from the well-known "Magnet Inc." in the late '90s.

What is the greatest lesson that 2020 has taught you?

BK: You need to hire people who see the bigger picture, who have the innate desire to create and achieve great things. It has to come from more than just the CEO.

How are you decompressing during these unprecedented times?

BK: [I enjoy a] glass of wine with my wonderful wife and family.

Is there anything you would like to add to give our readers a better sense of your business approach and the industry at large?

BK: Enjoy what you do, and it won't seem like work. I love what I do and the people around me. 🍷 They are the best. 🍷



You need to hire people who see the bigger picture, who have the innate desire to create and achieve great things. It has to come from more than just the CEO.

– BILL KOROWITZ, CEO, MAGNETS 4 MEDIA



WHO WE ARE

PRINT+PROMO

Print+Promo is the leading source of business strategies for the distributor sales professional. Featuring a monthly print magazine, weekly e-newsletter (*The Press*), in-person events (Distributor Connect) and an updated website that includes a free product search database to sort through more than 300,000 promotional products, Print+Promo helps print industry professionals protect legacy revenue and grow new revenue streams.

NAPCOMEDIA

NAPCO Media, Print+Promo's parent company, is a leading B-to-B media company specializing in creating community through content via integrated media programs, video services, marketing services, events and event management, custom content, eLearning and market research. NAPCO Media has rapidly expanded its portfolio to include NAPCO Video Services, NAPCO Events, NAPCO Marketing Services and NAPCO Research.