Business Development Services

Unlocking recurring revenue through strategic portfolio optimization in a post-consolidation market

In a consolidating market, standing still means falling behind. Commercial print executives who rely on shrinking transactional volumes face compressing margins and increasing vulnerability to acquisition-driven competitors. This use case shows how strategic business development creates diversified, recurring revenue streams that strengthen both operations and enterprise value.

Gimbel & Associates
Management Consulting for Commercial Print
www.rogergimbel.com

GIMBEL & ASSOCIATES

THE PROBLEM

The CEO of a $28M commercial print operation had watched margins compress steadily over three years despite investing in new digital press technology. Revenue was concentrated in a shrinking pool of transactional print work—statements, invoices, and compliance documents—with no meaningful strategy for diversification. Two regional competitors had recently been acquired by national consolidators with deeper pockets and broader service portfolios, creating aggressive pricing pressure.

The executive team recognized that continuing to compete on price in commoditized segments was a losing strategy, but lacked clarity on which adjacent markets to pursue, how to repackage existing capabilities for higher-value clients, or what operational changes were needed to support a new business mix. Internal planning efforts had stalled due to conflicting priorities between sales leadership (who wanted more volume) and operations (who wanted higher-margin work).

THE SOLUTION

Gimbel & Associates conducted an Executive Business Assessment, beginning with a full audit of pricing structures, service mix profitability, and capacity utilization across all production lines. The analysis revealed that 35% of the company's press time was consumed by low-margin work that could be consolidated or repriced, while the VDP and web-to-print capabilities the company had invested in were being dramatically underutilized.

G&A developed a strategic business plan identifying three high-potential growth corridors: personalized direct mail programs for regional healthcare systems, branded marketing collateral fulfillment for multi-location franchises, and regulatory document production for financial services firms. Each corridor was mapped against the company's existing equipment, workforce skills, and geographic reach.

The engagement included a structured partnership strategy, connecting the operation with complementary technology vendors and a data services provider to offer integrated campaign solutions rather than standalone print. G&A also worked with the sales team to develop value-based pricing models that aligned pricing to client business outcomes rather than per-impression costs.

THE OUTCOME

Within twelve months, the company launched its direct mail program, securing three healthcare clients generating $1.8M in new annual recurring revenue. The franchise fulfillment service attracted two pilot accounts, with web-to-print portal utilization increasing from 12% to 58% of capacity. Overall blended margins improved by 4.2 percentage points as the revenue mix shifted toward higher-value work.

The strategic plan also strengthened the company's positioning for potential acquisition or partnership discussions, with a clear growth trajectory and diversified revenue base that increased the operation's enterprise value independent of commodity print volume.

MEASURABLE IMPACT

Diversified revenue streams insulated from paper volatility, enhanced EBITDA multiples for exit positioning, and sustainable competitive advantage through operational excellence.

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