



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Market Sector

Printing

Cost of Doing Business Support

For information on **reducing the cost of running your business**, the [Find Business Support](#) website has links to advice, funding and regional support.

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Printing** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website (www.bgateway.com/businessplan), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **January 2024**. If you find the information contained in this document useful, tell us about it! Send us feedback [here](#); we will use your comments to help improve our service.

What do I need to know about the Printing market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ The Printing industry's performance has been constrained over the past five years, due to the popularity of digital alternatives to printed materials. Demand for printed materials has fallen over the period as consumers and businesses have gradually transitioned towards trading online. Demand from downstream markets has been edging downwards due to the growth in popularity of reading online and through other electronic alternatives. Industry revenue is anticipated to tumble at a compound annual rate of **4%** over the five years through 2023-24 to **£9.2 billion**. (IBISWorld, *Printing in the UK*, December 2023)
- ◆ After falling **by 15% in 2020**, Mintel estimates that UK circulation of print national newspapers declined less significantly **in 2021, falling by 9% to around 1.3 billion**. Mintel forecasts that UK national newspaper print circulation will continue its long-term decline over the next five years, **falling 33% by 2026 to 850 million**. (Mintel, *National Newspapers - UK*, 2022).
- ◆ Industry performance is set to pick up in the coming years. This is in line with the government's push to boost the performance of the services and finance sectors which should boost demand for out-of-home marketing material. Advertising material printing is the leading segment. Printing advertising materials is the biggest segment in the industry and includes the printing of things like posters and pamphlets. Lots of businesses opt for this method as they deem it the most effective. (IBISWorld, *Digital Printing in the UK*, December 2023).
- ◆ The greetings card market is forecast to return to growth over the next five years. Mintel estimates that the UK greetings card market fell by 0.8% in 2020, in value terms. This was driven by a decline in single cards for the period, which was estimated to be worth **£1,515m, down 1% from 2019**. (Mintel, *Greetings Cards & Personal Stationery Retailing, UK*, Feb 2021).
- ◆ The national organisation for this industry is the [British Printing Industries Federation](http://www.britishprint.com) (www.britishprint.com). Other industry bodies include [Independent Print Industries Association](http://www.ipia.org.uk) (www.ipia.org.uk) and the [British Association for Print and Communication](http://www.bapc.co.uk) (www.bapc.co.uk).

Where can I find more information on my market?

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email info@bgateway.com.

- ◆ **Mintel – Books and E-books (2022)**. The number of people buying a print book has decreased since hitting a peak of 67% in 2020 when lockdowns led to a surge in reading. Post-pandemic, as people return to out-of-home activities, there is less time available to read and greater competition for time and attention. Additionally, with incomes squeezed by a combination of rising prices and flat earnings, consumers may be cutting back on spending on nonessential items, including books. However, it is important to bear in mind that the book market is still growing and 60% of adults are buying books.
- ◆ **IBISWorld – Printing in the UK (December 2023)**. Manufacturers mainly use printing services for product labels and packaging. Prior to 2020-21, demand from this market had risen, partly because manufacturing activity improved since the EU referendum thanks to the low value of the pound boosting UK exports. Despite a sizeable drop in the demand from the manufacturing sector caused by business closures in response to the pandemic in 2020-21, demand from the manufacturing sector has increased faster than overall industry demand over the five years through 2023-24.
- ◆ **IBISWorld – Newspaper Printing in the UK (August 2023)**. Newspaper printers are coming up against significant challenges because of competition from online substitutes damaging sales of physical copies of newspapers, hitting revenue hard. Although some printers have managed to counter this decline by establishing online brands to attract advertisement revenue, not all businesses can take advantage of this opportunity. Revenue is expected to dip at a compound annual rate of 6.3% over the five years through 2023-24 to £402.1 million, including an estimated drop of 5.1% in 2023-24.
- ◆ **IBISWorld – Digital Printing in the UK (December 2023)**. Industry revenue is projected to grow at a compound annual rate of 3.3% over the five years through 2028-29 to approximately £1.7 billion. Strong growth in the number of UK businesses will drive expansion efforts in the industry. Rising out-of-home ad spending combined with strong UK retail and manufacturing will boost the rate of entry and the bottom line. Nevertheless, the rising digitalisation of marketing efforts across the UK will limit growth.

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

- ◆ [The Future of Global Printing to 2028 - British Printing Industries Federation \(BPIF\)](#) - This report discusses the key consumer, technology, and commercial dynamics shaping the evolution of the print industry across the next five years.
- ◆ **Print Monthly** (www.printmonthly.co.uk). An industry trade site with various news, features, blogs, and videos for all aspects of printing.

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How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as [Yell](#) ,[Thomson Local](#) or [Google Maps](#)
- ◆ Trade specialists like [EuroPages](#) (European directory), [The Wholesaler](#) or [Free Index](#)
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as [Kompass](#)

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the [Companies House](#) website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Market and customer research](#) will help you to identify new trends, opportunities, customers and competitors.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these websites, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the [Census Area Profiles](#). Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ [Understanding Scottish Places](#) has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ [Scottish Government Statistics](#) provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- ◆ [The Scottish Household Survey](#) provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.

How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) "[Find a Chartered Accountant](#)" tool

Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

Legal Help

Gov.uk "[Licence Finder](#)" tool

Law Society of Scotland's "[Find a Solicitor](#)" tool

Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

Please note: the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing](#)

Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

We hope you find this Market Report useful and we'd love to hear your feedback [here](#).

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

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