

IT'S A
BLOG!

Entering the Print Industry: My Top 5 Takeaways

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Transitioning from tertiary studies to the workforce can certainly be a big step in anyone's career, regardless of your profession. This new phase is exciting, daunting and exceptionally overwhelming as you encounter new experiences and meet new people. Whilst exciting, this phase also highlighted some blind spots for me that made the transition feel more like a clueless jump than an informed step.

University studies successfully equipped me with a range of skills, including communication, marketing principles and graphic design techniques. As I neared the finish line, I began the inevitable job search. My mission was simple: plant a solid foot in the door of an industry that my skills applied to in a role that offered growth. As the job search progressed, I discovered a range of roles and industries where my skills were applicable. However, it wasn't until I landed a particularly exciting position in the print industry that I realised how hidden this goldmine was. Even though the investment in a tertiary education offered me a solid foundation, I still couldn't believe how uninformed I felt transitioning to the workforce and encountering the abundance of opportunities it held—particularly in PRINT!

After my first month in the print industry, it became apparent just how much there was to learn. The industry surprised and intrigued me in unexpected ways. I couldn't help but wonder, why wasn't this industry introduced to us as an avenue during my university studies? Given how closely interlinked design and communications are with the print industry.

Let's take a quick peek at the stats ...

The Print industry accounts for \$6.9 billion of Australia's revenue and is one of the largest manufacturing sectors in Australia. That's right! Almost 6,500 businesses and 27,000 employees exist in the printing and graphic arts industry, and these numbers continue to grow.

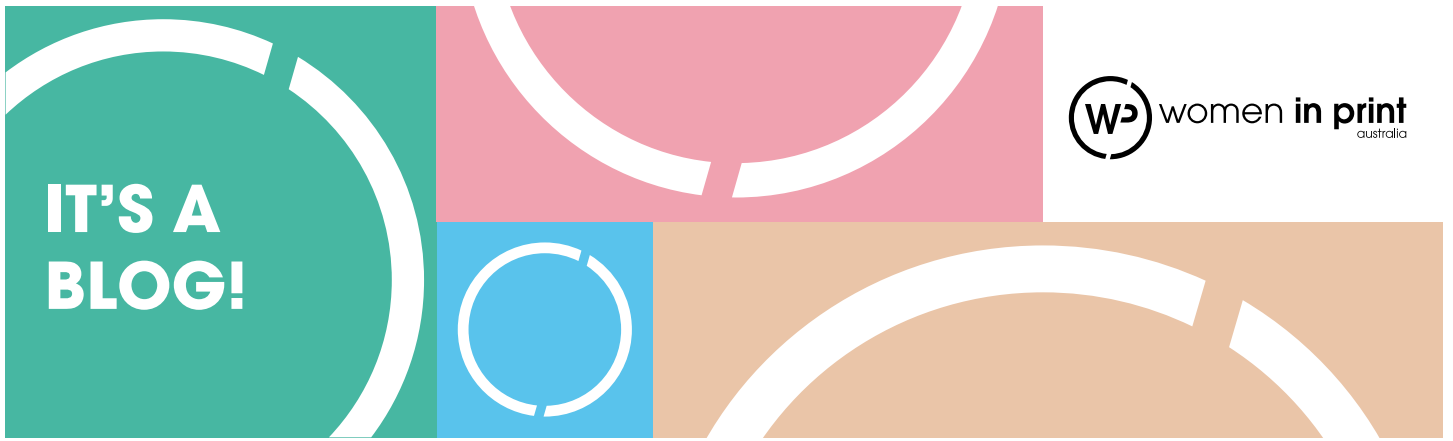
Eighteen months in, I'm surrounded by inspiring professionals and gaining knowledge from invaluable experiences. Here are my top five takeaways in the hopes that it will encourage, inform and persuade other women to head in this direction.

1. ALL-ROUNDER FOR THE WIN

As I became acquainted with the print industry, I was grateful for the chance to experience as many components as possible. From marketing to sales, to design and production, this opportunity cultivated a deeper understanding of the print industry. Rather than limiting my knowledge to one area, I was able to navigate what I wanted to pursue as well as explore different pathways that were available.

2. THERE IS MORE TO PRINT THAN MEETS THE EYE

While you might have just one role in the print industry, there is a whole network of processes going on around you, each comprised of numerous steps, stages and possibilities. The more you can learn and understand the process as a whole, the better you will be at fulfilling your role.



3. THE PRACTICAL SIDE OF GRAPHIC DESIGN

(This is a huge one, especially as someone with a graphic design background!)

While it is fun to create funky new designs, there is also an important component to design ... practicality. Be creative, think outside of the box, push the boundaries, but also understand how things work. What is possible to print? What are the solutions to what you want to achieve?

4. YOUR SUPPLIERS & INDUSTRY EXPERTS ARE YOUR NEW BEST FRIENDS

The more you can learn from the experts around you, the more you get out of it. In my first six months, I soaked up as much as I could and asked plenty of questions. Because the quicker you learn how to do things correctly, the easier you make it for people to work with you. Consequently, more people are willing to offer invaluable guidance as well.

5. PRINT IS EVERYWHERE: LET'S EDUCATE, EMPOWER & INSPIRE MORE WOMEN TO ENTER THIS SPACE!

One of the amazing things about my role in this industry is that I am fortunate enough to work with small businesses and organisations from such a wide cross-section of other industries. And the one thing that stood out to me was just how many businesses required some form of printing.

Have a think ...

How many brands, companies and organisations do you know that require some kind of print, be it flyers, posters, banners, packaging or signage?

In fact, I would be hard-pressed to find one business that does not use print at some point in their journey. This is a huge industry with so much to offer. Out of all the women that enter the marketing, communications and design space, there has to be a way to attract, educate and encourage these talented ladies to enter the print industry. Because it's not just loud machines and the smell of ink, it's an industry abundant with potential connections and compelling opportunities.

I am passionate about connecting and engaging other women in the print industry, as it has served as an invaluable catalyst in my career, offering me connections, skills, and opportunities that I never could have expected. Women, it is time. Let us claim our space in this industry!

About the author

Tanya Storey is the Marketing Coordinator, Sales Assistant and Graphic Designer at 20Twenty Communications, an Australian Printing company that houses a range of print brands in the industry, including Bannerworld, Bannermart, Wollongong Printing, Selfie Frames Online, Albury Wodonga Print, Banners & Flags, Mesh Banners and Ezyskinz. Tanya has worked in the industry for over 18 months after graduating from a Dean Scholar, Bachelor of Communications and Media (majoring in Graphic Design & Marketing) at the University of Wollongong NSW in 2020. She is driven by all things communication, marketing and design, and is particularly passionate about empowering women in the print industry.