

# TOP 25 HOT MARKETS FOR PRINTING IN 2021

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The 25 industries & sectors that are forecasted to spend the most on printing in 2021.

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IN CONJUNCTION WITH:

**Packaging** Impressions | **Wide-format** Impressions

# HOT MARKETS

## Forecast For Print Demand

# IN 2021

All-in, the Top 25 Hot Markets will account for 97% of total printing, which is a 2% increase from 2020. New and evolving print demand categories and impending declines in traditional mainstays are realities we must address in a COVID-19 world.

By Vincent Mallardi, C.M.C.

**2**021 will (better) be the “2020” that never happened. After the unprecedented setback caused more by politics than the coronavirus, the economy will open this year with a vengeance, and print will be 1/100 or more of GDP for the first time in decades.

The words “Open for Business” will be on everything reflective or transmitted if we reawaken our marketing and sales acumen. The best sales season in print history is in the months ahead if we get to work. Technology is making most everything possible, thereby raising individual and business confidence and expectations. Overall, prepare to sell a one-time-only \$211B, resulting from pent-up demand in an economy that will take two to five years to recover from this once-in-a-century shock.

**Packaged Foods** ▲▲ (\$1.68T, +8%; with \$26.8B to print, +16%), at No. 1, is the most appetizing print demander, especially with the added packaging and labeling costs required in drive-through and home-delivery. Best positioned are corrugated and board printers and converters, and wide-format flexography for imaging polyethylene (PE) stretch wrap.

In worst place are producers of (and suppliers to) *bottled and canned prepared products* (-8%). Breakage, denting, density, shelf-life, and consumer preference to more contemporary packaging will drive the segment to extinction. So, too, will be the fate of most large-format sheetfed presses and label affixing machinery. Direct-to-product imaging will surpass labels in this decade.

### COVID-19 Curtails Digital Food Packaging

Another disappointment, prompted by the pandemic, is highly personalized digitally-printed packaging. It's great technology, but an unjustifiable incremental cost to food packaging. Also in decline will be point-of-sale displays, shelf-talkers, channel, and end-aisle print. COVID-19 has benefitted, at least temporarily, the production of directional graphics, including floor-spacers and signage, but this will end.

There will be increased interest in intelligent packaging across the sector, and a return of package inserts as these are re-discovered by the home-delivery category.

Related, but oppositely (as in “take-out-only”), is No. 11 **Foodservice ▼▼** (\$860B; -20%; with \$8.6B to print, -15%). *Restaurants, take-aways, bars and clubs* (-22%) will at best partially recover as social distancing affects all but outdoor and home delivery.

Upstarts like *Doordash* (+300%) will be celebrity “branding” appetizers, entrées, and desserts to be prepared locally and delivered, likely on a subscription or membership basis. Print demand will decline at a lesser rate if only because of larger portions in direct mail, newspaper FSIs, flyers, and promotional products ordered to introduce these new entrants. Yelp reports that more than 100,000 eateries will be permanently closed, affecting some 3 million jobs. Some 30 franchise chains will be among them. *Institutional foodservice* (-14%) will serve up at 1/5 fewer workplaces and educational facilities as the work-from-home phenomenon becomes a norm. The exceptions will be “canteen” services to essential facilities such as in health care and security.

At No. 2 is **Medical/Pharma ▲►** (\$891B, +13%; with \$19.6B to print, +4%). *Medical devices* (+7%) will sustain revenues and print buys in a 40:1 proportion with record sales of respirators, testing devices, and all manner of diagnostic and vaccine delivery products related to the pandemic. *Pharmaceuticals and biotech* (+17%) will benefit from the fast-track R&D experience and deliver a long overdue next round of patentable drugs.

Collaboration in the COVID-19 projects will bring about mergers in Bigger-Pharma. Thirteen companies account for 1/2 of sector revenues presently as the result of more than 30 acquisitions in past years. (The unlucky number will round out to eight this development cycle.)

Strict, compliant packaging is the largest print demander as it adds “smart” to construction and secure labeling. Miniature-folded inserts, expansion labels, blister packs, waiting-room posters, retail POS, and both magazine ROP and bind-in advertising round up sector requirements. On the way is telemedicine, which must have a printing component to develop. *Cannabis* (+16%) is lighting up in more U.S. states, but with no pattern as yet for gauging print.

**Health Providers ▲▲** (\$5.44T, +12%; with \$18.1B to print, +16%) will move up to No. 3. No wonder, as *hospitals* (+15%) admitted more than 70,000 unanticipated COVID-19 patients in one year, and have had to depend financially on Medicare loans, grants, and partial reimbursements! A return to “normal” will bring back higher-revenue private non-emergency admissions, procedures, and outpatient activity. In anticipation, expect name changes, new logos, and market repositioning ripe for new signage, interior décor, fundraising, periodicals, outdoor, and transit print.

### Urgent Care Replaces Private Practices

*Private physician practices* (-6%) are declining to extinction, the effect of which will be a doubling of *urgent care centers* (+12%) to 16,000 locations and a revenue stream approaching \$44B. The segment is in beginning-phase consolidation with catchy new facility appearances, names, and service ranges.

The “walk-in” model is evolving into pre-care club memberships, “concierge” medicine, and remote presence in — or affiliations with — fitness, nutrition, and other self-development groups.

Open-house events, loyalty programs, direct mail, and promotional products will be increasingly demanded.

Important to note will be health insurance for which no forecast is possible post-election. The private third-party providers will have to “up their game” in branding to fend off the emergence of a single-payer public option or imposition. The fight will be fierce, print-intensive, and not without casualties.

### Growth of Wines, Liquors, Infused Beverages

Pouring into No. 4 will be **Beverages ►►** (\$547B, +2%; with \$11.1B to print, <4%). *Fermented and distilled drinks* (+6%) are a mix of 1/2 negative-growth beer and very positive outlooks for wines, liquors, and infused flavored beverages. *Tequila* (+33%) leads the field of white blends.

*Soft drinks* (-3%) will be in the 14th year of flat to lesser consumption depending on calorie category, but still comprise 1/3 of the beverage sector. *Coffees, teas, and juices* (+3%) will remain steady. New brands and infused mixtures are in the works, but not yet broadly distributed. *Cannabis-infused drinks* (no forecast is offered) will likely be the seventh “liquid” category, but not in 2021.

The principal print opportunities are and will be paperboard carriers, metal-decorated cans, aseptic packs, stretch-wraps, adhesive labels, bottle closures, floor and wall graphics, window clings, POP/POS displays, branded apparel, and vehicle wraps.

At No. 5 will be **Publishers, Non-Newspaper ►▼** (\$77B, -5%; with \$10.9B to print, -12%). The spate of titles relating to divisive politics and the presidential election has spiked but will level adult and juvenile trade book publishing at 1/3 of the sector, followed by *periodicals* (-15%) in steep decline to the same share.

As millions of book remainders languish on warehouse shelves or arrive at landfills, the remaining categories are holding steady at slightly less than a 1/3 share for varying cultural distinctions. The impending acquisitions of both a book printer and a book publisher by one integrated media company is worth a long-look at matching supply and demand reciprocally.

*Religious publishing* (+20%), which includes sacred music, is followed, in turn, by *professional and academic publishing* (+2%), and *social expression* (+0%) greeting cards, envelopes, giftbags, ribbons, and wraps.

Principally, in the miscellaneous residual, are illustrated novels or generally recognized as *comic books* (+33%). This culturally derelict publishing oligopoly leaves big gravure and web printers nowhere. For the medium-to-smaller shops with perfect binding equipment somewhere — comic books are very new and as yet unrecognized.

**Real Estate ►►** (\$2.47T, +4%; with \$10.8B to print, +0%) is level at No. 6, but only for retail closings and downward office rent renegotiations that are collapsing *commercial real estate* (-25%). Skyscrapers, big-box stores, and shopping malls are nearly empty as these were overbuilt in the first place, and will be lifestyle irrelevant in the future. Repurposing is the only option — and a bad one for any return on investment.

That said, directional signage, décor print, and advertising materials will build to over \$2B annually as “new” high-rise condos, indoor playlands, senior residences, and all occupancy alternatives are conjured up.

# Demand Sector/Category Rankings By Print Potential for 2021

Rank	SECTORS/CATEGORIES	Revenue Forecast in US\$Billions	Growth Rate %	Printing Trend 2021-2022	Share to-Print %	Print Potential in US\$Billions	Print Change %
1	PACKAGED FOODS	1,684	8	▲▲	1.6	26.8	16
2	MEDICAL/PHARMA	891	13	▲►	>2.0	19.6	4
3	HEALTH PROVIDERS	5,444	12	▲▲	>0.3	18.1	16
4	BEVERAGES	547	2	►►	0.4	11.1	<4
5	PUBLISHERS, NON-NEWSPAPER	77	-5	►▼	14.2	10.9	-12
6	REAL ESTATE	2,468	4	►►	0.4	10.8	—
7	TRAVEL HOSPITALITY	720	4	▼▼	1.4	10.2	-5
8	TELECOMMUNICATIONS	1,390	-2	►►	<0.7	9.8	-2
9	PERSONAL CARE	597	11	▲▲	>1.5	9.0	9
10	BANKING/INSURANCE	5,870	3	►▼	<0.2	<9.0	-9
11	FOODSERVICE	860	-20	▼▼	1.0	8.6	-15
12	HOME IMPROVEMENTS	1,032	7	▲▲	>0.8	8.3	<8
13	AUTOMOTIVE	1,986	2	►►	<0.4	7.0	—
14	DISCOUNT RETAIL	1,962	4	►►	0.2	>6.4	—
15	ENTERTAINMENT	757	-6	►►	0.8	6.0	2
16	FASHION	487	-13	►▼	1.1	5.3	-17
17	SECURITY/PROTECTION	360	5	▲►	1.8	5.3	—
18	LOGISTICS/FREIGHT	1,108	11	▲▲	>0.4	5.0	15
19	INVESTMENT/BROKERAGE	1,230	-5	►▼	0.3	3.6	-8
20	LEISURE ACTIVITY	215	-4	▲►	1.5	3.2	-11
21	COMPUTERWARE	800	-4	►▼	0.4	3.2	—
22	PRIMARY/SECONDARY EDUCATION	1,080	5	►▲	0.7	2.4	40
23	GOVERNMENT/FED., STATES	10,758	19	▲▲	0.2	2.4	5
24	ENERGY	1,566	22	►▲	0.1	1.6	—
25	GAMING/WAGERING	206	-15	▼▼	>0.1	1.5	-26

TOTALS/AVERAGES – HOT MARKETS	\$44,095	—	—	<0.6	\$205.1	12
OTHER DEMANDERS	14,750	—	▼▼	<0.1	5.9	-24
LESS: OVERLAP (CHAINED)	-36,880	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS/AVERAGES – ALL	\$21,965	7	►▲	<1.0	\$211.0	>3

All data are rounded.  
Green = 5% or more gain in print.  
Red = 5% or more loss to print.

Conversely, the residential single-family housing market is at the commencement of a boom. Some 21,000 more *existing homes* (+1.5%) and 37,000 fewer *new homes* (-7.2%) were sold year-over-year in 2020; 40% more units than forecast by pandemic pessimists. On this new-found foundation, homebuilders and realtors could surpass \$8B in print buys, principally in signage, guides, FSIs, sell-sheets, forms, direct mail, stationery, and 3D modeling (yes 3D!).

*Residential/rentals* (+0%) will be less tight as home buying rises, and will face the dilemma of excess student dormitory and apartment inventories as higher education attendance falls. Print in this segment will be similar to the commercial requirements.

Grounded, vacant, and adrift at No. 7 is **Travel/Hospitality** ▼▼ (\$720B, +4%; with \$10.2B to print, -5%). After a horrific crash in revenues among the three principal segments, 2021 will begin what the travel industry describes as “a slow, 5-7 year recovery.” *Airlines and airports* (-5%) will continue with mandatory spacing and reduced flights, partially made up with increased airfreight activity. International schedules will partially recover next year, assuming an end to the pandemic, which indicates that ad spending will not take off until Q4 2021.

*Lodging* (+8%), following a 48% check-out in 2020, will be slowly increasing occupancy, if mostly to truckers and essential-travel workers (like printing salespeople). Homestays, now quarantined, will resume double-digit growth and, again, challenge the hotel/resort categories, as soon as this summer.

## Tide Will Rise Slowly for The Cruise Line Industry

The tide will lift the biggest print spender, *cruise lines* (-5%), by mid-year, but with fewer ships and schedules for the first time in 70 years. Updated schedules, travel catalogs, posters, periodicals, onboard and in-room amenities, and directional/decorative signage will be back if we do our work.

No. 8 **Telecommunications** ►► (\$1.39T, -2%; with \$9.8B to print,

-2%) is disconnecting from reality by clinging to pipes and clamoring for 5G, both of which are at the fringe rather than the core of the sector's connective future. Customer centrism is not in the DNA of former monopolists, and the corporate culture is void of value-marketing, which leaves only price fighting. Five companies will account for 1/2 of total sector print out of more than 1,200 smaller operators. Retail packaging of mobile devices and accessories, store indoor, window and outside signage, and transit advertising will continue to be everywhere.

**Personal Care** ▲▲ (\$597B, +11%; with \$9B to print, +9%) is No. 9, up three notches for 2021. *Sanitary/sanitizing products* (+10%, after doubling last year) will continue as new habits will be hard to break. Products and services in *hair, skin, and sun-care* (+8%) are rebounding with distance, but demand for *cosmetics, perfumes, makeup, and toiletries* (-10%) are in retreat.

Displays and counters at supermarkets are closing and, with few exceptions, the big drugstore chains are not providing personalized demonstrations and practiced encouragement. In-home network-marketing operators are picking up and reaching out to consumers with new private-label offerings. Postcards, packaging, fragrance cards, samplers, and gift-wraps are replacing store retail display graphics.

Sliding to No. 10 is **Banking/Insurance** ►▼ (\$5.87T, +3%; with \$<9B to print, -9%), with a fixed at No. 19 **Investment/Brokerage** ►▼ (\$1.23T, -5%; with \$3.6B to print, -8%). Consumer branch banks and walk-in stock brokerages are not where the money is made by the big banks and investment firms, most of which are interconnected.

Remote transactions will be the norm with direct mail, commuter rail, and event sponsorship print emerging as the media to promote the migration from bricks and mortar. Paper forms, checks, stock certificates, and prospectus offering circulars are gone.

Non-banks, inclusive of money exchangers from crypto currencies to payday loan retailers, are future prospects, as are independent insurance agents and financial advisors. Overall, however, the sectors are shrinking.

**Home Improvements** ▲▲ (\$1.03T, +7%; with \$8.3B to print, <8%) at No. 12 will continue to build as property owners "at-home, in-place" utilize their new-found time for overdue do-it-yourself fixups and purchases of new *appliances* (+6%), *furnishings* (+6%), and *construction materials* (+8%) — from windows to doors and everything else from floors to ceilings, and the tools to do each job.

*Home Depot* (+25%) is the largest participant, biggest gainer, and worth a visit to be overwhelmed by the amount of point-of-sale, folding cartons, flexo sleeves, labels, on-packs, and dye-sub print. Check out the wallpapers, veneers, countertops, and other printed OEM products. And, surely pick up one (or an entire pile) of "shoppers" at the door!

## Ride the Home Improvement Wave

The primary ad medium for this sector is print. Let's keep it that way at every lumber yard, hardware, paint, and furniture store, and among the thousands of professional remodeling independent installers.

**Automotive** ►► (\$1.98T, +2%; with +7% to print, +0%)

idles in at No. 13. The rush to *electric/hybrid vehicles* (+4%) is by politicians, not consumers, who see a deteriorating power grid and rolling blackouts today, long in advance of best 1/5 of motor vehicles plugging in.

Former President Obama surprisingly admitted recently that "Americans don't want electric cars; (they) like their gas-powered vehicles." The remark may have been meant as a put-down, but he's correct at least from a marketing standpoint. Indeed, the prospect of arbitrary-date mandates will accelerate demand for *passenger cars* (+10%) in the short-to-medium term.

From our printing perspective, the contest is a zero-sum game, leaving the only road open for our medium: customer loyalty programs revved up with memberships, transpromo, branded collectibles, and inviting in-store experiences. Visit a Harley-Davidson dealership for some ideas.

In the OEM/aftermarket space, *vehicle parts/décor* (+4%), and auto finance and insurance will support out-of-home screen, digital, and dye-sub work, as demand remains level across this sector.

**Discount Retail** ►► (\$1.96T, +4%; with \$>6.4B to print, +0%) rises to No. 14. The proportions between big-box same-store sales and online orders are shifting during the pandemic toward online. Amazon-to-Walmart relative growth rates are 15:1.

Corrugated board *packaging/sealing tapes* (+8%) are best positioned, but for advertising-material printers, the question is "Why aren't more package inserts being sold?" The penetration is less than 1:50, which is absurdly low considering it's a free-ride product with a benefit of intelligent sortation. FSIs and in-store shoppers, shelf-talkers, end-aisle, floor, and window graphics will be level, even as *Albertsons* (+20%), *Kroger* (+11%), *Costco* (+7%), and *Target* (+6%) same-store sales continue at record rates.

Off-price "*dollar*" stores (+8%) are cutting back print advertising because the mix of products is changing from housewares to sanitary/personal care where, under anticipated prolonged isolation, this category doesn't need to advertise.

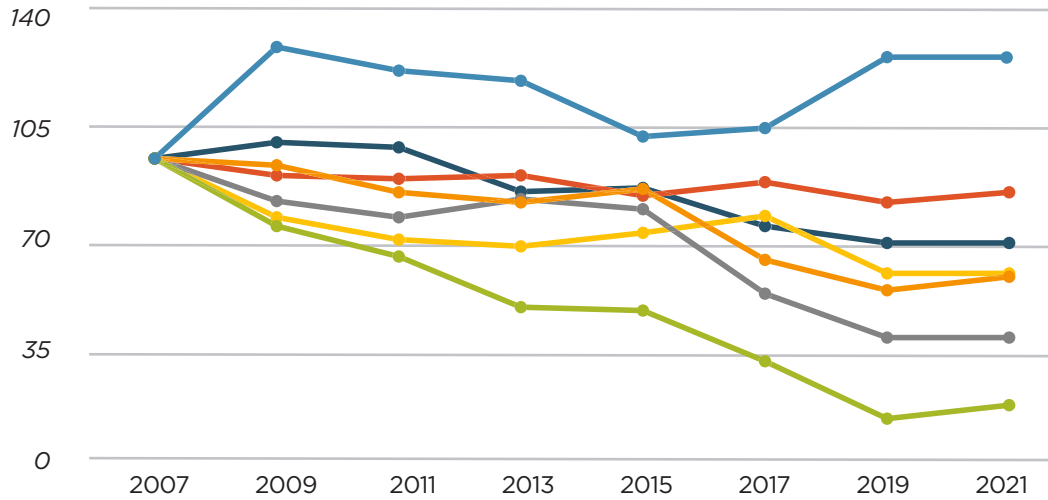
## Curtain Has Closed for Live Performances

At No. 15 is **Entertainment** ►► (\$757B, -6%; with \$6B to print, +2%) with curtain closings — perhaps for years — for "live" performances. Theater companies, music groups, and venues are disbanding and unlikely to regroup. The drop in posters, programs, sets, and signage are incalculable because it's a demand segment ideal for local printers. If the largest participant, *Live Nation* (-20%), is indicative, it is halving its workforce. *Spectator sports* (-22%) are impacted most in lost ticket sales and those in related concession, merchandise, local sponsorships and, by extension, print.

Minor applause may be directed at home-delivered *TV, radio, motion pictures, and cable/satellite* (+4%) as these delivery alternatives promote live streaming and expanded-offering SVOD (subscription video-on-demand). Direct mail, especially transpromo, monthly programs, and themed merchandise should rebound, but far short of past levels.

**Fashion** ▼► (\$487B, -13%; with \$5.3B to print, -17%) at No. 16 is not wearing well when there's no place to be seen in the latest fashion color of the year. Many retailers are in

**PRINTING DEMAND TO REVENUES BY COMBINED SECTORS/CATEGORIES 2007-2021**  
(Index with 2007 = 100)



Foods/Beverages   Financials   Technology   Durables   Health   Print-Media   Discretionaries

financial stress or are just closing down thousands of locations, stripping malls and laying bare luxury fashion boutique avenues in every major city. Same-store-sales will remain 10% to 20% below pre-pandemic years, barefooting down in double digits, largely in shoes and accessories.

Online and catalog sales are easing the pain with the latter forecast to increase in quality and distribution. Worst impacted will be FSIs, store displays, and signage; least worse off are labels/packaging.

Locked at No. 17 is **Security/Protection** ▲▶ (\$360B, +5%; with \$5.3B to print, +0%), a wide-ranging sector encompassing people, places, and all things valuable. *Home security* (+8%) is the fastest-growing segment as less-costly WiFi alternatives to hard wiring are available in conjunction with other smart household devices. Direct mail, FSIs, transpromo, package inserts, decals, lawn signs, and installation/operational manuals will bring about triple the market penetration from 1:6 (2020).

Various print designed for this sector includes security tapes, intelligent IDs, anti-counterfeit product-proof labels, and tamper-resistant packaging utilizing nano-optics, digital-steganography, thermo-chromatics, microprinting, latent imaging, holography, and a myriad of applied technologies. In the more conventional *surveillance/alarms* (+3%), *hazard detection* (+12%), and *perimeter protection* (no forecast is calculated), requirements range from signage to uniforms, passes, badges, and vehicle wraps.

**Logistics/Freight** ▲▲ (\$1.1T, +11% from a revised +19% in 2020; with \$5B to print, +15%) will load up at No. 18. Demand is succeeding supply, which signals inelastic double-digit freight rate increases despite lower fuel costs and easy-to-navigate empty highways. *UPS* (+14%) leads the industry overall while *FedEx* (+12%) is incrementally increasing its charges after the first-of-the-year average of 4.9% to “phases” that may anticipate 9% to 11% by year-end 2021. The contributing inflationary effect with energy prices rising with return demand will account for most of 1/3 of the revenue increases.

The *U.S. Postal Service* (+4%) will — while trailing sector growth — be the largest and most diverse print buyer. Novel,

automated “last mile” drop-off and pick-up will become the norm by the end of the decade (assuming the rest of us are still around). Multimodal robotics, including on-route preparation of perishables, will share the air, roads, and sidewalks, while both onboarding materials for production while off-boarding finished products in a perpetual looping route.

Screen and digital vehicle wraps, corrugated boxes, and directional docking signage will be ubiquitous. The *USPS* (+4%) will raise package pricing and continue as the largest buyer of preprinted standard mailers, envelopes, packages and, yes, postage stamps and forms.

**Leisure Activity** ▲▶ (\$215B, -4%, with \$3.2B to print, -11%), at No. 20, is participation dependent, which stay-in-place doesn't support. Participation sports, toys and games, destination theme parks, and most every group activity are on hold, as is advertising and promotion. Optimism for a summer reopening is more hope than reality, except for *fitness club and home equipment gyms* (+5%), after twice the growth pre-pandemic. Comebacks for labels, packaging, rack brochures, signage, and branded promotional merchandise at best is a long fairway, field, alley, or ride ahead.

**Computerware** ▼▶ (\$800B, -4%; with \$3.2B to print, +0%) is No. 21. *Personal computers* (+0%) will be flat in unit sales and peripherals after a bump last year from the large numbers of new workers at home. This also prompted a two-times ad spike for *computer software* (+10%). The few remaining print opportunities are in outdoor, POS and transit screen, and litho car cards, bus wraps, and carriage posters. Aside from Apple, Dell, HP, and Microsoft which, among a few others, engage in multi-platform brand management, the sector is mostly B2B in components and SAAS; not a significant buyer of print beyond intermediate labeling and packaging.

### Remote Learning Creates Print Demand

At No. 22 is **Primary/Secondary Education** ▶▲ (\$1.08T, +5%; with \$2.4B to print, +40%). The closings of schools, and the resulting displacement of students, are prompting accountable printed notes, tests, and instructional materials delivered

to homes. Online, under-supervised learning is failing among the 80% of households with internet access, and will fail the most for at-risk student populations with no access.

Elhi curricula going forward will be hybridized with an increased print component. This should extend to re-socialization activities; good for a comeback of some school newspapers and yearbooks.

Up two rankings to No. 23 is **Government, Federal/States** ▲▲ (\$10.76T, +19%; with \$2.4B to print, +5%) will approach 50% of GDP in the second year of double-digit increases from 35% (2019). This will be the tipping point toward a command economy with government participation in critical private sectors, and concomitant increases in public procurement in Q4 2021.

Meanwhile, the present largest, non-mandate budget and supplementary funding item is **Defense and Homeland Security** (\$1.3T, +7%). Required are extensive screen and litho print, notably wayfaring signage, vehicle decals, manuals, documentation labels, and forms.

*Other Federal* (-30%), excluding emergency response to the pandemic, are drastically reduced for the arts, commerce, the interior, and transportation. Many historic cultural and arts venues are, and will stay, closed. Agencies will increasingly utilize private contractors to circumvent fiscal restraints. *State governments* (+0%) will go off-balance-sheet to fund emergencies while maintaining an on-budget balance.

### Get a Charge from Alternative Energy Shift

New at No. 24 is **Energy** ►▲ (\$1.57T, +22%; with \$1.6B to print, +50%). The changing role of *convenience shopping/fueling stations* (+50%) will be profound as these facilities accommodate alternative energy delivery — be it electric, natural gas, hydrogen, or some radical breakthrough process.

Total store revenues, including food, fuel, and everything else on the properties, will surpass 1/3 of the total sector before netting. In-store signage, décor, directional outdoor, floor and window clings, and loyalty programs are emerging as the number of locations increase to 200,000, and the average footprint doubles to 6,000 sq. ft.

The future of America's gas and electric utilities will be a major issue, as generation and distribution are inadequate to handle existing consumption under imposed environmental and political constraints. Expect energetic ad and PR campaigns powered by out-of-home and direct mail print.

Finally, at No. 25 is **Gaming/Wagering** ▼▼ (\$206B, -15%; with \$1.5B to print, -26%). This sector depends on volumes of game-addicted clientele who, in turn, crave exciting experiences. *Casinos* (-15%) with spaced slots separated by plastic shields, and table games mostly unattended, are not winning combinations, especially with poker faces concealed by masks. No loyalty program can deal a full house, and player behavior after the pandemic may fold most of the industry.

Scratched off will also be *state/provincial lotteries* (-18%), which depend on small retailers for distribution. What small retailers? Demand for POS/POP, card games, and outdoor is shrinking and, once the urge to bet plays out, there's no coming back.

Missing from the previous Top 25 Hot Markets (HM-25) in print demand are **Higher Education** ▼▼ (\$240B; -27%; with \$1.3B to print, -40%); and **Societal Activity** (includes elections) ▲▼ (\$155B, -41%; with \$1.2B to print, -46%). Other significant print buying sectors will be **Government/Regional** (\$>1.9T, +3%; with \$1.2B to print, -40%), and **Electronics/Non-Telecom & Non-Robotics** ▼▼ (\$240B, +0%; with \$1B to print, -20%). The balance of print demand will come from nearly 200 unclassified residuals in both **Business-to-Business and Other Consumer Activity** ▼► (\$10.1T, with \$0.7B to print).

Among the HM-25, **eight** (unchanged from 2020 as revised) will increase demand for print by a range between 5% to 40%, and account for 2/5 of total buys. Ten (unchanged from 2020) will be near level at -2% to +4%; and will tally at 34%. The remaining **seven** (equal to 2020) will decline between -5% to -18%; and will constitute 26% of total demand.

All-in, the HM-25 will account for 97% of total print, a >3% increase from 2020. New and evolving demand categories in this new decade, and impending declines in traditional mainstays where we've always sold, are socio-political and techno-economic realities we must address. Managers have the choice between **leading** or **lagging**. Strategic decision-making is proactive and controlled; the opposite is reactive where others determine the outcome. ●

*The entire 134-page report contains breakouts of sectors/categories by specific print product groupings cross-tabulated to specific geographic markets. It is available by subscription. Contact Vince Mallardi at (215) 821-6581 or email vince@pbba.org*

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# WHO WE ARE

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NAPCO Media, *Printing Impressions*' 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.

## PRINTING UNITED ALLIANCE

PRINTING United Alliance is the new entity borne of the merger between Specialty Graphic Imaging Association (SGIA) and Printing Industries of America (PIA). In a milestone in the printing industry, SGIA and PIA officially combined in 2020 to create the largest, most comprehensive member-based printing and graphic arts association in the United States. Members will soon have unparalleled access to preeminent education, training, workshops, events, research, government and legislative representation, safety and environmental sustainability guidance, as well as resources from the leading media company in the industry - NAPCO Media. For PRINTING United Alliance membership inquiries, visit [sgia.org](http://sgia.org). To learn more about local Affiliate membership, visit [printing.org](http://printing.org).