

9 SIGNS YOU NEED A LARGE FORMAT PRINTING SPECIALIST



ARE YOU GETTING THE RIGHT PRINTING SUPPORT?



9 SIGNS YOU NEED A **LARGE FORMAT PRINTING** SPECIALIST

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INTRODUCTION

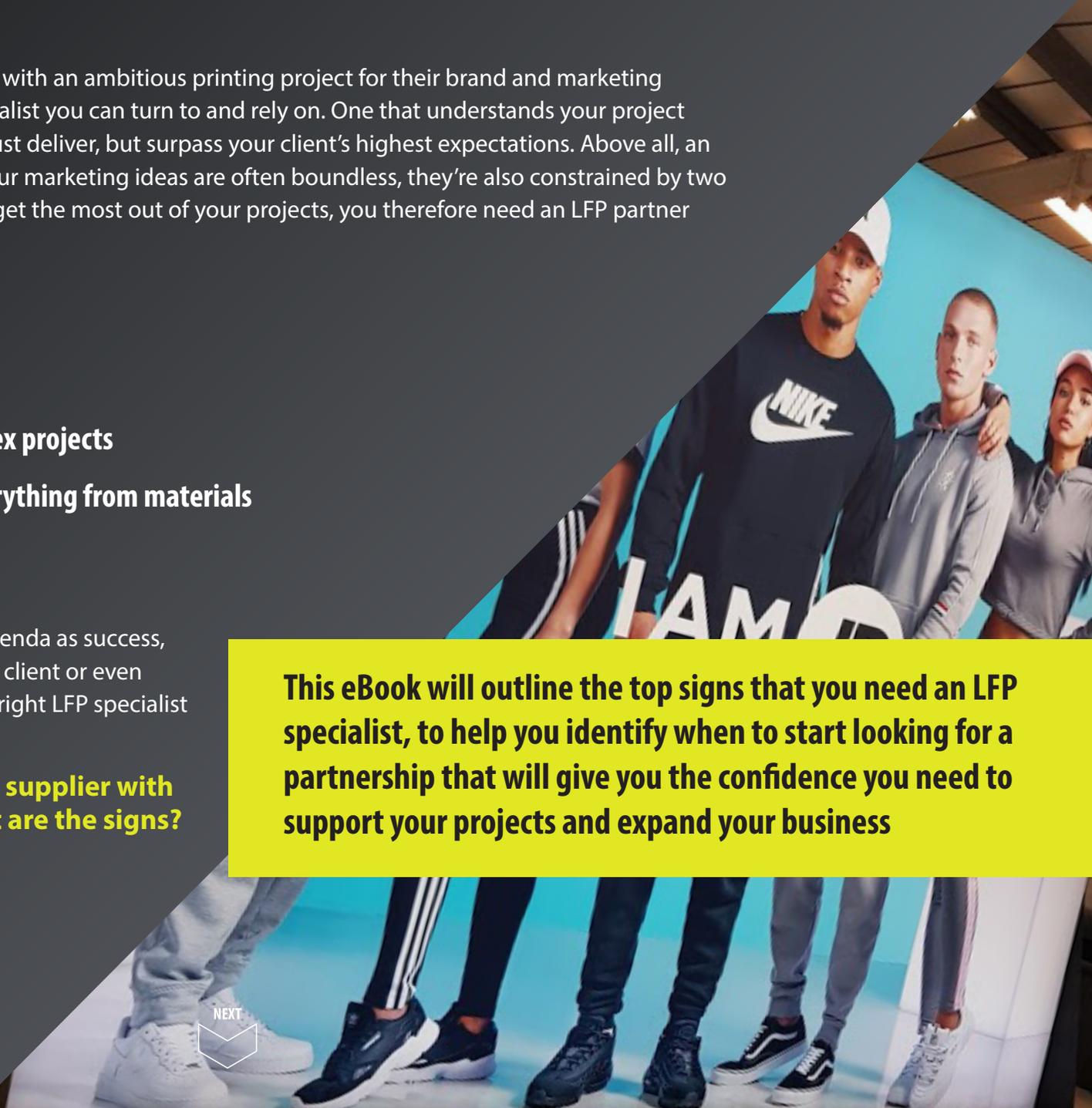
When a client throws you a curveball or comes to you with an ambitious printing project for their brand and marketing activities, you need a large format printing (LFP) specialist you can turn to and rely on. One that understands your project needs, no matter how complex - that helps you, not just deliver, but surpass your client's highest expectations. Above all, an experienced LFP specialist understands that, while your marketing ideas are often boundless, they're also constrained by two strict and ever-present masters - time and money. To get the most out of your projects, you therefore need an LFP partner that is all of the following:

- **Responsive**
- **Timely**
- **Communicative**
- **Reliable**
- **Honest**
- **Agile**
- **Imaginative**
- **Keen to tackle complex projects**
- **Able to advise on everything from materials to logistics**

At a time when business survival is as high on your agenda as success, you don't want to find yourself making excuses to the client or even losing contracts. Which is why - today especially - the right LFP specialist isn't just a need, its a necessity.

But how do you know that you need an LFP supplier with all of these qualities in the first place? What are the signs?

This eBook will outline the top signs that you need an LFP specialist, to help you identify when to start looking for a partnership that will give you the confidence you need to support your projects and expand your business



1 YOU'RE MISSING OUT ON EASY REVENUE

DISCOVER NEW WAYS TO BOOST YOUR BOTTOM LINE

There's a saying: 'you don't know what you don't know.' It's for this reason many agencies and independent print houses miss out on revenue, turning down potentially lucrative work because they don't know how to fulfil and deliver it. This is particularly true when clients make unusual or complex printing requests that appear too tricky to tackle. These are the same independent print houses (IPH) and agencies that could just as easily say 'yes', if only they knew an LFP specialist who could help them.

Without this support, IPHs and agencies drift, sticking only to what they know - the tried and tested - failing to diversify and expand, inadvertently sending potential and even existing clients into the clutches of their competitors. But why slip back in the race when you can so easily partner with a printing specialist that can both inspire you and drive your business forward?

AN LFP SPECIALIST THAT SAYS 'YES' IS THE EDGE YOU NEED

No matter how complex a project might seem at first glance, an experienced LFP supplier will be able to help, and is a vital companion when it comes to assessing exciting new revenue streams and exploring new routes to market. Partnering with a supplier that says 'yes' to more challenging projects and experimental ideas puts you, as an agency or IPH, in a great position to differentiate yourself in a way that will impress your clients and colleagues, and take business from your competitors - not the other way around.

Forging a solid relationship with an established LFP specialist will give you the confidence you need to be bolder in your marketing pitches, giving you the best chances of securing the contract and providing ballast to your bottom line.

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2 TECHNICAL CHALLENGES ARE HAMPERING YOUR MARKETING MISSION

WHY YOU SHOULD PARTNER WITH A SUPPLIER AT THE CUTTING EDGE OF LFP

Richard Branson was famous for 'going big' on wrapping trains in bold Virgin colours and logos, wrapping planes, and launching Virgin-branded hot air balloons that could be seen for miles. Many creative agencies tasked with making an impact on a grand scale often feel overwhelmed by the magnitude of the projects that they brainstorm. If you ever find yourself asking any of the following questions you're not alone...

- Q How do I print a forty-metre high image on the side of a tall building?
- Q What's the most cost-effective way to transform my interior event space into the perfect setting for my client's target audience?
- Q Is it possible to get an unusual vehicle like a speedboat or ferry wrapped to showcase my client's brand?
- Q Can I get my client's van wrapped in white vinyl so customers can draw and doodle on it?
- Q How easy is it to print on fabric and textiles?
- Q Is it possible to create custom packaging for my client's new campaign?

The good news is these are the technical challenges that your LFP supplier should be familiar with and can handle on your behalf.

The right LFP specialist will give you the confidence you need to deliver solid marketing pitches that elevate you in the estimations of the clients you're keen to win, and those you want to retain. In short, if you're an IPH or agency that needs to come up with fresh ideas on a daily basis, the right LFP specialist can help you win, and win big!

3 YOU NEED TO WIN NEW CONTRACTS AND KEEP EXISTING CLIENTS HAPPY

SIX THINGS AN LFP SPECIALIST CAN DO TO HELP



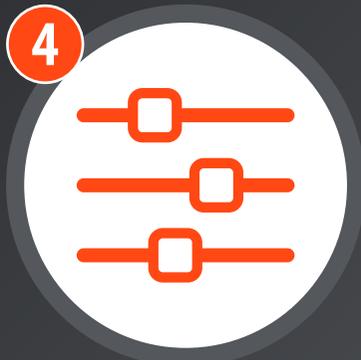
Make suggestions on the best materials to use to make the right impact



Ensure that, whatever you do, you stay within your allocated budget



Source sustainable materials if your business or project requires it



Help you refine more unusual ideas through its research and design team



Share their ideas with you so that you can propose solid marketing ideas to clients



Give advice on timelines and quantities

4 YOU WANT TO SCALE-UP - AND FAST

WHY IT'S ESSENTIAL TO USE A SPECIALIST WITH HIGH VOLUME, BESPOKE AND ON-DEMAND PRINTING CAPABILITIES

Many printing companies will only do business with you if you want to print large volumes. But if you're an IPH, that's never going to be enough. If you're going to manage your projects to the exacting standards your clients expect, a more personal touch is needed.

You might also want to oversee aspects of the work, visit the factory to see the equipment and technology being used, and have some oversight on printing fulfilment. If you need to create a prototype, for example, or test the adhesive on a particular substrate, you need an LFP specialist happy to meet your off-the-wall requests.

5 REASONS TO USE ON-DEMAND PRINTING

- 1 Gain complete flexibility over print volumes - no minimum print runs!
- 2 It's cost-effective, so you can work within budget or reallocate funds to other areas of your project
- 3 It's better for the environment, reducing waste from over-printing
- 4 Gives you complete control including aspects of design and prototyping where required
- 5 You can be more experimental with your ideas to find a final product that you and the client are happy with

Having a supplier onside who understands your client-facing challenges while keeping your margins intact is business critical. A high-end specialist LFP supplier should be able to introduce you to more diverse print-related opportunities, including on-demand printing that can help you attract and win new clients. They will also be happy to assist you with smaller print runs and one-off samples.

5 PROJECTS REQUIRE EXTRA CAPACITY

BE PREPARED TO MEET THOSE CLIENT DEMANDS

Whether working in an agency or as a trading professional, being agile and ready to adapt to changes, ramping up volume while running the gauntlet of meeting tight deadlines and staying within budget, are part of the job.

Having a knowledgeable and trustworthy LFP specialist to ensure you meet increased capacity demands, often at a moment's notice, can spell the difference between campaign success and failure, and make you either look good or bad in the eyes of your clients.

When those volume curveballs come, and you need to scale up fast you need an LFP supplier with experience who can handle larger projects with ease, allowing you to deliver.

If you're looking for ways to boost your bottom line, talk to your supplier to discuss alternative products and services you can offer your clients. An experienced supplier will say 'yes' to experimental ideas and won't be put off by difficult technical challenges. They will also be able to scale up on your behalf which often makes more economic sense than increasing staff levels in-house.

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6 A CURRENT SUPPLIER HAS LET YOU DOWN

DISCOVER WHY TRUST IS A MUST

It happens to everybody. You engage with an LFP supplier in good faith and they let you down. Here are just a handful of regrettable scenarios that will make you wish you'd been more circumspect when choosing a specialist:

COLOUR INTEGRITY - Brand guidelines are sacred. So, discovering that your pantone doesn't look the same on different materials can be a real headache (not to mention costly to put right). A specialist LFP supplier will go to great lengths to ensure all of your colours match on each and every substrate.

MISSING FONTS - Discovering your sans serif turned into a serif and went to print is frustrating to say the least. Having a specialist who acts as your second pair of eyes ensuring mistakes like this don't occur is a great asset.

MISSPELLINGS - When a brand can't spell, it's harder to sell. And it has happened, even to the great and good of the branding world. A good LFP supplier will always, always carry out those last-minute checks ensuring there are no nasty typos in your copy ahead of sign off.

MISSED DEADLINE – Nail-biting, down to the wire moments are great in James Bond movies, but in time-sensitive advertising campaigns, they're not so popular. Whether it's printing large volumes or delivering that pop-up stand in time for your event, you'll want your supplier to be nothing less than reliable.

POOR COMMUNICATION - When you've got the Marketing Director of a big client breathing down your neck for delivery dates and costs, you don't want to have to keep fobbing them off. Which is why having an LFP specialist that has fluid and open lines of communication at all times is a must.

The above illustrates why having a print supplier you can rely on should be your first port of call. One that will check everything from colour, bleed and resolution to fonts and spellings making sure your end product arrives in a timely manner and meets or surpasses your expectations.

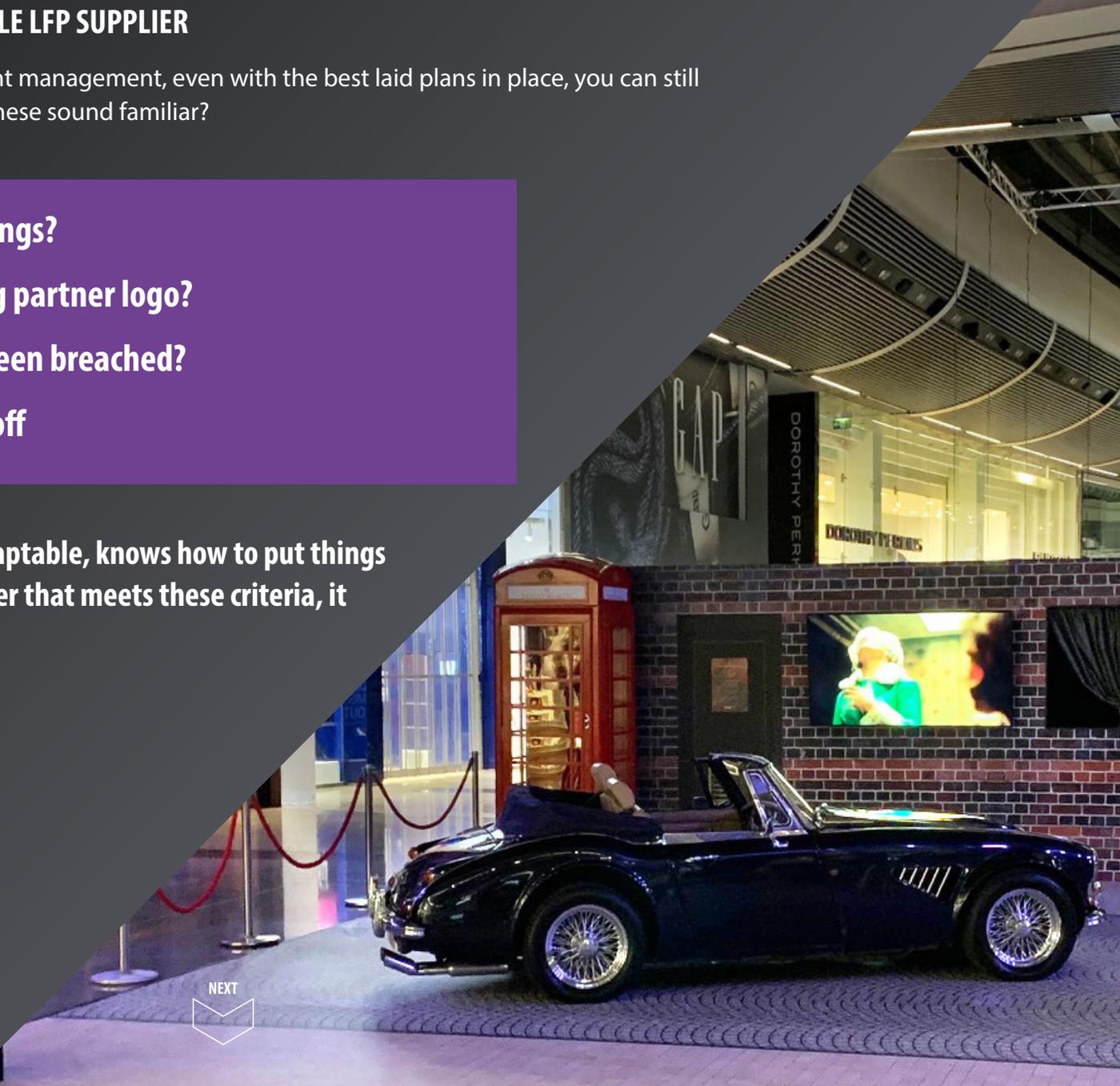
7 YOU NEED TO KEEP PACE WITH HIGH CLIENT DEMANDS

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO FIND A RESPONSIVE & AGILE LFP SUPPLIER

In the fast-moving world of brand advertising and event management, even with the best laid plans in place, you can still find yourself with your head in your hands. Do any of these sound familiar?

- Last-minute changes to line-ups and timings?
- The need to add or subtract a co-branding partner logo?
- Discovering that brand guidelines have been breached?
- The background colour or your banner is off

In these situations, you need a supplier that's adaptable, knows how to put things right, and do it quickly. If you don't have a supplier that meets these criteria, it might be a good time to start looking.



8 MEETING SUSTAINABILITY NEEDS IS A STRUGGLE

FIND A SUPPLIER READY AND ABLE TO MEET YOUR GREEN CREDENTIALS

Increasingly, clients want more than high-quality products, services and value for money. They want to know that their marketing efforts dovetail with corporate social responsibility (CSR) guidelines and don't have a negative impact on the environment.

Companies aiming to become carbon neutral and that want to improve sustainability along the supply chain are growing in number. If a client or prospect keen to improve their ethical credentials approaches you about a project, you'll want to find an LFP able to accommodate their sustainability needs. Here are some basic questions you could ask:

1 DOES YOUR LFP SUPPLIER USE NON-TOXIC INKS?

Some firms still use solvent-based inks which are potentially hazardous to employees and the environment as they release chemical gases. Look for a supplier that can offer aqueous-based pigmented, UV or latex inks.

2 DISPOSAL

Not all printing materials (substrates) are biodegradable or recyclable. If you have a sustainable project in mind, talk to your supplier about using substrates that won't end up going to landfill. Some suppliers will even collect and dispose of your marketing materials at the end of their lifecycle.

3 PRINTING ON TEXTILES AND PVC ALTERNATIVES

With soft signage, you can achieve great B2B or B2C branding and reach, with tension fabrics designed to be recycled. Discuss this greener PVC alternative with your supplier.

Word to the (sustainably) wise: Ensure your supplier has [Greenguard accreditation](#) to prove its inks are safe to be touched by members of the public - especially important in places such as children's nurseries and hospitals.

9 RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS ARE NEEDED FOR UNUSUAL PROJECTS

WHY A GOOD LFP SUPPLIER IS YOUR GREATEST MARKETING ASSET

The best printing firms will make the most of the government's R&D tax incentives, attempting new things such as printing on unusual materials - such as tension fabrics and textiles, PVC and non-PVC vinyl, or wood, metal and brickwork - or investing in new technology and tools. So, when you want to do something off-the-wall, things many printers will shy away from, you need an LFP provider as keen as you are to innovate and embrace the printing and marketing challenges you face.

Some less commonplace commissions might include:

Working with non-uniform shapes that require machine retooling for complex cutting

Printing onto plastic substrates that don't readily absorb ink

Using metallised papers for a metallic or holographic effect

Printing onto linen, fabric or sackcloth

Remember: The best suppliers will have an encyclopedic knowledge of which types of inks, finishes and print coatings work best with a wide range of weird and wonderful materials, and will be able to help you develop your marketing ideas and fine-tune your pitches.

A good LFP specialist will help you push new boundaries and even carry out R&D on your behalf to help bring your vision to life.

FINAL WORD ON LFP

The printing industry in the UK contributes a staggering £14 billion to the economy, with more than 10,000 print firms employing over 140,000 people. But while the industry is in rude health, not all LFP suppliers are made equal - sometimes it takes a specialist in the field to deliver the quality and variety of printed projects you need and provide you with the high level of customer service and rapid response you want and expect.

A good LFP supplier knows the rules of the printing game and can be a major asset for you in a rapidly changing marketing landscape - the ace up your sleeve that allows you to differentiate your business, and your clients, from competitors.

So, before you choose yours, run through this quick checklist to make sure you're partnering with the right one.

MY LFP SUPPLIER:

- **Understands**
- **Is knowledgeable**
- **Has been established for more than 10 years**
- **Is quick to respond**
- **Is flexible**
- **Is willing to explore and research unusual printing requests**
- **Invests in R&D**
- **Embraces complex projects**
- **Has ideas that I can monetise**
- **Suggests areas for additional revenue for my business**
- **Readily invests in new technology**
- **Is committed to training its employees**
- **Provides end-to-end support so I'm never left stranded**

If you have found your supplier and they've managed to tick every box, great! You're onto a winner. If not, maybe it's time to consider searching for a large format printing specialist, with the experience, consultative approach and research and development appetite to help you win more business.

ABOUT RACCOON

Raccoon is a large format printing company and vehicle wrapping service, helping businesses to increase brand awareness and visibility with cleverly designed printed graphics.

From stunning wall graphics, to posters, and even bespoke event structures or exhibition stands, the Raccoon team can help brands establish a presence and create impact.

Having supported business' printing needs for over 20 years, Raccoon's specialists provide consultative advice on suitable materials, colour matching, and meeting eco-friendly brand requirements.

[Visit the Raccoon website](#) to find out more and speak to the team about your plans.

Check out our online store

If you're looking for on-demand large format print, our range of promotional materials and signage can be completely customised - along with 20% off your first order!

[VISIT THE STORE](#)

More about exhibition display stands, retail and promotional event spaces

As well as large format printed products, we also work with businesses on bespoke pop-up projects, including display stands, retail spaces and container conversions.

[DISCOVER MORE](#)

If you would like to speak to our team about your Large Format Print requirements, [please get in touch](#).

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