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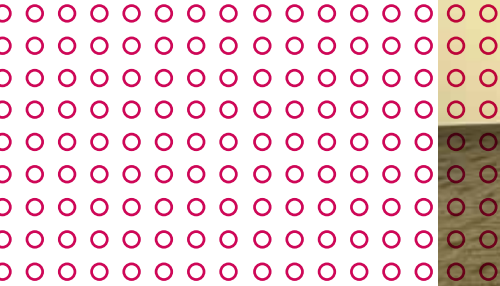


QUALITY FIRST

**For Gary O'Brien at
The Printed Image, 2025 is all
about delivering sustainable,
top quality products to clients**



In 2025, The Printed Image is planning to install solar panels on its production facility. It's the latest in a long line of steps intended to up the print firm's already impressive sustainability credentials. "Our clients are increasingly asking us about sustainability, but our efforts to reduce our carbon footprint are something we do as standard. In 2023, we became EcoVadis Gold certified; there are very few companies in Ireland that have achieved that accreditation. It puts us in the top 5% of over 100,000 companies in 175 countries and it's something we're really proud of. Our efforts to be as sustainable as possible go beyond what our clients want or expect – it's something we want to do ourselves," says Gary O'Brien, Business Development Director at The Printed Image.



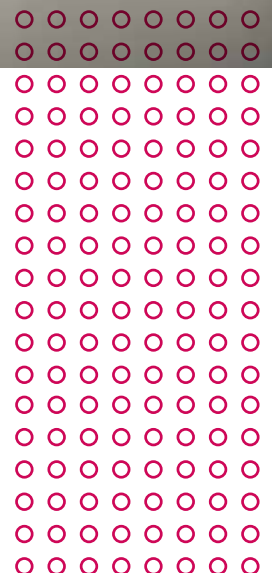
Established in 1990, The Printed Image has evolved from a traditional print firm to one that today offers a diverse range of services. An eagerness to adapt is the key to the firm's longevity, as is a commitment to customer satisfaction. "We have production staff that will come in over the weekend to complete a job. Our team are excellent, they really want to deliver the best possible product to the customer. I know it sounds like a cliché, but this industry is all about relationships. It's about our clients being able to trust us and knowing we'll deliver an excellent product, on time. We get a lot of repeat business because we go the extra mile for clients."

About 50 people are employed at The Printed Image. Recruitment is difficult across certain areas, an issue that's exacerbated by the housing crisis, cost of living increases and rental pressures. The lack of a State-sponsored apprenticeship scheme is also adding to the skills gap, although the Print Media Technician programme will hopefully go some way towards filling that gap, says Gary. Despite the challenges faced by the firm, business was good in 2024, albeit slow in Q1. A lag in client demand at the start of the year stabilised in Q2 and investment in new technology saw a boost to profits for the remainder of 2024. "We made some significant staff and capital investments in 2024 and hopefully, we'll see the benefits of those in 2025. We added two new presses and we also increased our small format capacity. We invested in two new CNC cutting machines, along with additional finishing equipment. We also upgraded our design infrastructure. We're constantly looking at how we can improve our offering to customers, so 2024 was a big year for that."

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merchandise in the country at the moment. It's a segment that our clients were constantly asking about and so we investigated what was required and just went for it. We've developed a huge supplier base, both locally and further afield, that we deal with on the branded merchandise side. It's a huge area of growth for us and I

A recently completed project by The Printed Image that included design, production and installation

"THE PEOPLE WHO ARE CRAZY ENOUGH TO THINK THEY
CAN CHANGE THE WORLD ARE THE ONES WHO DO."
STEVE JOBS



expect that growth to continue into 2025.”

Investment in technology has allowed for increased adaptability. Both sheet fed and roll fed are an option on the firm’s new large format presses. “Rather than having a machine specifically set up for sheet fed at a particular time of the year, say during the election, we now have the option of running other jobs on the same machine. That kind of flexibility allows for more capacity.”

In 2025, the ambition is to move into new sectors while still focusing on the firm’s core areas. “We don’t want to be a jack of all trades and a master of none either, so we’ll be selective

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We don’t want to be a jack of all trades and a master of none either, so we’ll be selective about our next move

about our next move. One of our mantras is around growth and innovation, but it has to be right. We may look at exports or move further into the signage segment, which is an area we’re already active in, but I think there are more opportunities there.”

Small and medium sized businesses are struggling to cope with additional costs from government, such as statutory sick pay, increases to minimum wage, employer PRSI and extra bank holidays. “Sometimes it feels like it’s all take but you’re not really getting anything back. Those government measures are creating challenges for firms that aren’t necessarily recognised. From a sales perspective, one of the biggest challenges is keeping the quality and the level of offering in line with decreasing budgets from clients. Our service includes artwork design, structural design, production and installation but budgets are being squeezed across the board. Maintaining the same level of innovation and service across all our departments can be very challenging, as you’re trying to get the client to understand and see the value of that particular service. But we’ll always work with our clients to come up with the right solution.”

Going into 2025 and beyond, the ambition is to continue delighting clients. “Maintaining that level of quality that our clients appreciate is the top priority. We don’t sell on price and that’s something we often say to our clients. It’s not that we’re not competitive, but we’re not into penny pinching over a couple of cents. It’s quality products that we provide and that’s what helps us grow our client base. We’re also very much focused on sustainability, our own and our client’s, and on our staff’s wellbeing. The Printed Image is a great place to work and we aim to keep it that way.”