



# A 21st-Century Guide to the Letterpress Business

*Marty Brown*

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## **A 21st-Century Guide to the Letterpress Business** Marty Brown

Letterpress printing may be technologically obsolete, but to paraphrase Mark Twain, reports of its death have been greatly exaggerated. In fact, a quick survey of the stationery trade would suggest that we are living in a new golden age of letterpress jobbing and card manufacturing. Letterpress continues to grow in popularity as a hobby, and also as a specialty printing service. It remains a viable business opportunity for creative and courageous entrepreneurs, but the contemporary letterpress printer faces an entirely different marketplace and a whole new layer of practical concerns than her predecessors in the trade. Today's printers are concerned with restoring, maintaining, and working around the limitations of aging machinery that cannot be readily replaced. They are working with digital typography, polymer plates, and fixed-based systems, in addition to traditional hand-set type and worn, antique cuts. Marketing channels have changed along with the tools of the trade, as the Internet has opened up new opportunities for reaching customers. This book offers a broad overview of the contemporary letterpress business, from the practical aspects of printing to standard business practices. The first part deals with the practical aspects of acquiring, restoring, maintaining, and operating a letterpress, while the second part is designed for those who already have some printing experience and are considering launching a letterpress business of their own.

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