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ePrint White Paper

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30+ years of print management, procurement, marketing and product development experience.

At Issue

A Major University & University Medical Center was faced with a common problem in the institutional world:
To Print or Not to Print in-house. They chose to **ePrint**.

Background

There is a growing trend in business and industry to focus more resources on core competencies and to outsource non-core work to professional companies who specialize in these non-core activities. Graphic design, Printing and Direct Mail services are all areas that represent opportunities for achieving substantial cost savings and delivering vast process improvements in order processing, order entry, job workflow, production, production management, invoicing and A/R, A/P administration through outsourcing. In addition, outsourcing frees up valuable capital that can be redirected to activities of core competence.

Printing, finishing, mailing and Graphic Communications hardware and software are very expensive. Obsolescence and replacement costs as well as maintenance agreements and software updates are frequently overlooked by purchasing and lower level management when making procurement decisions. The use of "pirated or copied" software also opens companies up to potential lawsuits that management may be totally unaware of. The "Total Cost of Ownership" is often only discovered after 5-year leases and subsequent supplies and service agreements are already signed and in place.

Many companies operate in-plant print shops. Most in-plant shops only operate one shift and have few, if any, dedicated customer service/sales reps that can adequately service the needs of their demanding clients. Graphic design and prepress services are typically inadequate and done on a hodge-podge basis with a majority of the work being outsourced to agencies or freelance artists. Post press bindery and direct mail services usually follow the same model as graphic design and prepress. A quick examination of most in-plant shops usually reveals that the shops are typically challenged with servicing the quality and time demands that would require the capacity, to borrow a plumbing analogy, of an 8-inch pipe, through the equipment, time and employee resources designed for the load of a 4-inch pipe. The result is that end users are typically not well served, deadlines are frequently missed and employees quickly figure out how to go around the in-plant shop to the marketplace to have their printing/graphics and mailing needs properly met. Consistent quality, price and corporate standards go right out the door with the work to the "vendor of the day" or to "a friend" who is in the printing business. The typical end user employee does not possess the professional ability to make procurement decisions based on the most qualified vendor for the job at hand. In most cases, employees overpay for what they get. The financial implications of this mindset are fairly significant.

The bottom line is that printing is rarely a core competence in most companies and is usually treated as a necessary evil with vendor changes done at the whim of a facilities manager or in response to customer complaints. The irony is that printing plays a critical role in the day-to-day promoting and publishing of most companies' activities of core competence! It is frequently said that Printing is the Currency of Business. Do you want your currency to be pennies or crisp hundred dollar bills?

Most printers and purchasing agents are mainly concerned with obtaining the "best price" based on a job-by-job or class of job basis. This 20th century mentality continues to fuel the low-tech environment that defines most printers and print procurement processes. Think about it, how much time, energy and money is spent in procuring a \$40 business card? The procurement process, manual order entry, POs and proofing, faxing, and approval process actually cost more money than the value of the end product! Valuable employee time is wasted buying mundane low cost items that do not contribute anything to a company's core competence.

Given this information, a paradigm shift is starting to develop.

The Challenge

Most corporations, institutions, municipalities and universities are made up of a variety of decentralized divisions and organizations, spread out over a variety of buildings, campuses or vast geographic regions that all have unique service or business mark requirements. The challenge was to develop a web-based solution that would replace an entire in-plant shop, all of its employees, delivery drivers, printing equipment, computers, software, delivery vehicles, overhead and benefits, provide better service and quality for less money, and do it within 4 weeks!

In addition this system had to provide:

- Immediate Cost reduction
- Improved delivery times
- Elimination of Paper proofs
- ZERO reprints for typos
- Purchasing process moved to end user desktop
- Easy to use web-based platform
- Eliminate any geographic limitations
- Digital full color on-line catalog
- 24/7 availability
- 20-50% reduction in print costs
- 40-75% reduction in print procurement and staff cost
- Redirection of valuable assets
- Greater system wide staff productivity
- Electronic invoicing
- On-line management reports 24/7
- Easy re-ordering
- Standardize Cost
- Site security
- Easy compliance with corporate standards
- Simple customization
- No expensive hardware to buy
- No expensive software licensing to pay
- No long-term service contracts

The Solution

ePrint. Click-Proof-Print!

ePrint, a state of the art web-based print procurement program and digital catalog, allows organizations to view, order, customize, manage, and distribute their business communication assets providing instant proofs of variable items on their own branded web sites. **ePrint** includes all of the above benefits plus instant e-mail order notification and confirmation, on-line proofing, gatekeeper options, shipping details, and much more. A robust scaleable internet-based solution that is tried and proven and currently services the needs of over 60,000 employees worldwide.

ePrint is organized into “galleries” and “products”. In the typical application, galleries represent divisions, organizations or product categories behind which specific products are found. These products can be either “composer” (personalized) or “pick and pack” (non-personalized). **ePrint** also has the ability to incorporate client-uploaded photos or graphics for added personalization of any printed piece.

In the case of our Major university & Medical Center, a live site was up and running within 24 hours of request for proposal with actual products for demonstration purposes. This live demo site became the first of two sites built in order to keep the University products separate from the Medical center products. Corporate Standards were provided in binder form and templates were created for all of the products being offered on both sites. During the course of the first few months after implementation product template edits were made based on client feedback and specific needs.

The Results:

After a year of operating two sites with 35 galleries and 300 products: MISSION ACCOPMLISHED! Purchasing is ecstatic with the results and the end users are far more pleased with the ease of use and the total procurement process. The end users can pay with either a company cost center, or with a credit or p-card. If they use the cost center option the number they provide is instantly verified against a database of 35,000 provided cost centers. The cost center database is updated quarterly or as needed.

Conclusion:

The most enlightened upper management of major corporations who are defining industry Best Practices, are realizing the need to focus on core competencies and the value of outsourcing non-core activities to experts who deliver greater value at less cost. These managers are rapidly adopting **ePrint** as their solution for managing and distributing their business communication assets. Contract Pricing is negotiated once, Corporate Standards are implemented and the purchasing department does not need to spend any more time approving and dealing with these low value transactions. Purchasing is then available to spend time on the details of the larger more valuable purchasing and contracts business that have major bottom line impact.

For a demo of this exciting technology please go to <https://eprint.universalprinting.com/eprint> and register as a new user and feel the power. For immediate information please contact:

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