CASE STUDY: INNOVATION PRINTING

Innovation is More Than a Name

Automated Marketing Solutions Change the Game

For more than 35 years, Innovation Printing has led the industry with a comprehensive suite of printing solutions and a knowledgeable customer service team with a state-of-the-art production facility that operates 24/7.

Historically, the company focused on the manufacturing of high quality annual reports, but over the last decade has lived up to its name by continuing to add innovative services that expand its range of offerings beyond sheetfed commercial printing.

"We established a separate company, Innovation Marketing, to provide digital services and begin our transition to a provider of marketing services," explains Henry Wagner, Chief Technology Officer. "That business has grown to 12 employees generating more than $3 million in annual revenues."

Innovation Marketing invested in an array of digital printing devices, including a Xerox iGen3 and iGen4, a Xerox DocuTech 6180 for monochrome printing, and HP 5000 and 6100 inkjet printers for wide format printing.

In early 2010, the firm leveraged Wagner's experience with web-to-print and other marketing-oriented solutions to craft an RFI that was sent to all major vendors of marketing storefront solutions. "The RFI covered everything I had been able to do with storefronts in the past," says Wagner, "plus all of the things I would like to be able to do. We never expected 'yes' answers to all of the requests, and we didn't get them. But much to our surprise, **Responsive Solutions**® could do almost everything we asked, and that led us to base our

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marketing services offering on its **CUSTOMER+**®
Marketing Resource Center™ platform."Wagner
also pointed out that he was impressed with the
flexibility of the system and its ease of integrating
with most customer business logic requirements
due to the fact that it can easily be extended using
INTERFACE+™, **Responsive Solutions'** software
development and web services offering.

CORE DECISION CRITERIA

Wagner explains that one of the most important
decision criteria for Innovation Marketing was the
fact that **Responsive Solutions' CUSTOMER+**
platform is built on an open database and is inte-
grated with Adobe's InDesign Server. "InDesign
is the default design tool in the industry," he adds,
"and there were many InDesign features and func-
tions we were unable to support
with solutions using a plug-in to
interact with InDesign, or with
a PDF workflow, which is how
most other systems function."

This, combined with the
ability to manage a wide
range of materials and
vendors as well as digital asset
management, cross-media
communications, inventory
and fulfillment,including
strong brand management
control, all from a single
integrated interface, made the
CUSTOMER+ platform an ideal
match for Wagner's needs.

DATA FEEDS DRIVE DIFFERENTIATION

The one capability that was not available when
Innovation Marketing first implemented the
CUSTOMER+ platform was what Wagner calls data
feeds. "In the past, we had been able to drive fields

from a spreadsheet in a very rudimentary fashion,"
he says. "But we wanted to go beyond that, and
Responsive Solutions was willing to work with
us to add some pretty amazing capabilities."

Wagner's intent was not just to drive the popula-
tion of variable fields, but to also guide the user
by filtering the data to offer only relevant choices.
"This is too complex to be done with a simple
spreadsheet application," he says. "I like to use the
analogy of searching for a vehicle on Autotrader.
com. A buyer may start by indicating he is seeking a
Ford vehicle. The next drop-down menu only pro-
vides a choice among Ford models. Once the buyer
selects an F-150 truck, the next pull-down will ask
if he is seeking 2-wheel or 4-wheel drive, continu-
ally filtering the choices down based on previous
selections until
the ideal vehicle
is specified. "

"This type of ap-
proach not only
makes the buy-
ing experience
easier for the
customer, but it
greatly reduces
the number of
templates we
have to support.
That's what
**Responsive
Solutions** was
able to bring to
us with its data
feeds capability."

*"Because of the intelligence
built into the database,
we have been able to
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templates for this client
from 5,000 to 27.
We save a tremendous
amount of ongoing costs
associated with template
management."*

Wagner cites one large client, a major player in
the food service industry, who needed to meet
new Federal regulations to present nutritional
information on menu boards, labels and any other

materials that make reference to food products. "The ingredients, and the regulations governing them, are changing all the time," he says. "We wanted to offer an easy way for our client to manage this data and ensure regulatory compliance. Data feeds, combined with the native InDesign Server integration offered by **CUSTOMER+**, made that very easy to implement."

MENU CHOICES MADE EASY

The food services client's packaging includes nine different label types, everything from a cup label to a sandwich belly band. Each label type has different styles; for example, one is green and black; another looks like Kraft paper. Labels are also differentiated by the category of product they identify and the specific recipe—sandwiches versus wraps, hot versus cold, etc. With its existing PDF workflow, this meant the client had to manage more than 5,000 different templates.

"No matter how small a change there was to a given template," says Wagner, "we had to start from scratch and make a new template. And we couldn't accommodate InDesign features such as type on a curve or transparencies, so the client's design options were limited. As inconvenient as all of that was, cost was the biggest issue, and the client couldn't understand why making a few simple changes could take three days or more."

EXPENSIVE CHANGES ELIMINATED

According to Wagner, the average template change consumed 45 minutes at $50 per hour. That equates to a cost of nearly $4,000 to make 100 changes. With **CUSTOMER+** data feeds in place, the process is much simpler. Wagner explains: "Because of the intelligence built into the database, we have been able to reduce the number of templates for this client from 5,000 to 27. When a change is required,

we simply make the change once in the database without the need to redefine fields or edit field behaviors, and the next time labels are created, the right data is reflected, regardless of the type of label or food product selected."

In addition, because designers are able to work directly in InDesign to design labels, there is virtually no learning curve. "With any other solution," he says, "you use a plug-in, at best, and an entirely different workflow, at worst, so designers need to learn an entirely new design methodology, and they are not able to take full advantage of all of the capabilities of InDesign."

ONGOING INNOVATION

Wagner is also working with **Responsive Solutions** to introduce the ability to call out variable InDesign templates within the data feed. With this functionality in place, the number of templates that need to be maintained will be reduced to three. He explains, "By being able to specify a style, such as the green black, and then specify a type of label such as a cup or belly band as a database field, the user experience and the process of keeping the entire database current will be much simpler."

Other changes are simple as well. If a logo is changed, the new logo is updated once in the database, and through data feeds, flows to all the places it is used. Without data feeds, the logo change would need to be manually made against each individual template, taking time and incurring excessive costs.

Bulk upload of data has also reduced administrative time by 100-fold, Wagner indicates, saying, "If there is a mix of items, including static items, promotional items and variable print-on-demand items, we simply create a spreadsheet that contains all of the variables and upload it to the system in about 15 minutes—instead of requiring 15 minutes or more

per item. We recently uploaded 600 new items for a client, and you can imagine how pleased we were with the efficiency of that process!"

KEEPING PACE WITH CHANGE

For Innovation Marketing, **Responsive Solutions** offered another huge advantage. Wagner says, "**CUSTOMER+** is tightly integrated with our print MIS, EFI PACE. With our previous system, there was still a great deal of manual intervention to get a job into the system. Now, when a client creates an order, everything you could imagine is automatically populated into PACE. These tiny jobs you could never afford to put a planner on are automatically built and planned right in PACE, and sped automatically through the production process. In addition, we have real-time visibility into our financial and production performance, no longer needing to wait until the month closes to see how we are doing."

PARTNERS IN SUCCESS

Just as Innovation Marketing reflects the DNA of Wagner's company, he reports that **Responsive Solutions'** name reflects its DNA. "With our previous system," he says, "any significant change we required took six months and $10,000. We work with pharmaceutical and financial services companies who are not willing to wait six months, let alone incur such a large customization cost. In one example, our customer issues purchase orders on an item level, and we wanted to be able to track the remaining value on a purchase order within the system. We had the change implemented within three weeks at a cost of about $2,000. Now that's Responsive!"