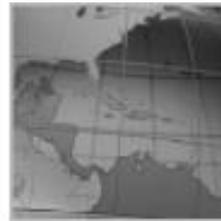


Case Study



December 2014

Executive Press Invests in PRISMA Solutions for Streamlined Workflow and High Quality

Written for Canon U.S.A., Inc.

Canon

CANON U.S.A., INC.

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Executive Summary

- Executive Press, a print service provider in Texas, has found tremendous benefits with the addition of digital color and automated workflow from Canon U.S.A., Inc. (“Canon”).
- Executive Press estimates that it can save up to 10-12 man-hours in relation to its old processes for some jobs, enabling prepress staff to devote their time to other tasks.
- Executive Press has eliminated errors related to paper selection through Canon’s PRISMAsync controller, which enables the use of a centralized media catalog and a job scheduler that informs the operator when media should be uploaded for a certain job.
- Executive Press’ customers have extremely high quality requirements. The intelligent color management system of Canon’s PRISMAsync controller, which links different color profiles to different media types, has been crucial for color matching.
- According to InfoTrends’ research, color management software is the top investment consideration among commercial printers.
- Digital printing accounts for approximately 40% of Executive Press’ revenue, and the company expects this figure to increase in the future¹.

¹ Data provided by Executive Press, October 2014

Introduction

When it comes to business communication services, Executive Press (Richardson, TX) is a one-stop shop. The 26-year-old company is committed to providing its customers with virtually any printed product or service to help clients communicate more effectively, from design and prepress to promotional products and beyond. General Manager/Owner Dave Allen founded the business as a small 1,000-square-foot copy shop in a bank building and has transformed the firm into a full-service provider occupying more than 20,000 square feet. Today, Executive Press is a growing organization that has invested in traditional and digital technologies to deliver superior quality, exceptional turnaround times, and competitive prices. By embracing a philosophy that the success of its clients is directly tied to its own, Executive Press has become a fixture in its local community and is viewed as a trusted partner for business communication services.

Figure 1: Images of Executive Press



A Focus on the Manufacturing Sector

Executive Press has targeted local manufacturers in the Dallas market. According to Dave Allen, “We pride ourselves on getting to know our clients on a very personal level, and we’ve developed strong relationships with the local manufacturing firms in our area. We keep a close eye on their demands and invest in equipment accordingly.” This focus on clients’ demands has enabled Executive Press to become a trusted specialist for a wide variety of marketing materials. The company’s primary applications include brochures, marketing magazines/newsletters, postcards, and training/operations/parts manuals.

The Right Technology Makes a Difference

Offering services from design through to mailing and fulfillment requires the right technological investments. Executive Press has a variety of world-class printing devices, including Heidelberg offset equipment and a Canon varioPRINT 120 digital press for black & white production. The company’s most recent acquisition is a Canon imagePRESS C7010VPS digital color press. Allen states, “Our equipment mix ensures that we deliver the highest quality, but we needed to back this with streamlined workflow to meet tight deadlines and remain competitive from a pricing perspective.”

When considering its next investment (the Canon imagePRESS C7010VPS digital color press), Executive Press reached out to its dealer and trusted advisor, the Stewart Organization (Dallas, TX). Executive Press followed the Stewart Organization’s recommendation to upgrade its workflow to support its growing digital print demands. Executive Press transitioned its digital print workflow and controller to PRISMA solutions. According to Operator Todd Johnston, this investment really enabled the company to streamline its production print processes within the commercial printing market. Johnston explains, “With our old system, imposition capabilities were limited and labor-intensive. With the PRISMAsync solutions, our prepress activities are streamlined. This eliminates steps in our workflow, helping to reduce turnaround times and increase productivity. The system has had a positive impact on our entire workflow and frees up the prepress staff for other tasks.”

PRISMA solutions make it much simpler to manage jobs across devices. Executive Press can now manage job splitting automatically using Océ PRISMAprepare, which provides the necessary routing for black & white printing and color printing. The parallel processing capability of Canon’s PRISMAsync controller helps ensure that all of this is happening at the necessary speed, thus securing performance levels. Dave Allen elaborates, “In the past, the jobs would have been sent through prepress so someone could manually prepare the work, and the prepress department would likely need to take an entire day just to lay everything out. Now, the software and press with inline finishing do all the work. In some cases, the new system can save up to 10-12 man-hours in relation to the old system, and the prepress people can devote their time to other tasks. This improves the workflow in our prepress and postpress departments alike.”

Figure 2: Benefits of PRISMA Solutions Realized by Executive Press²



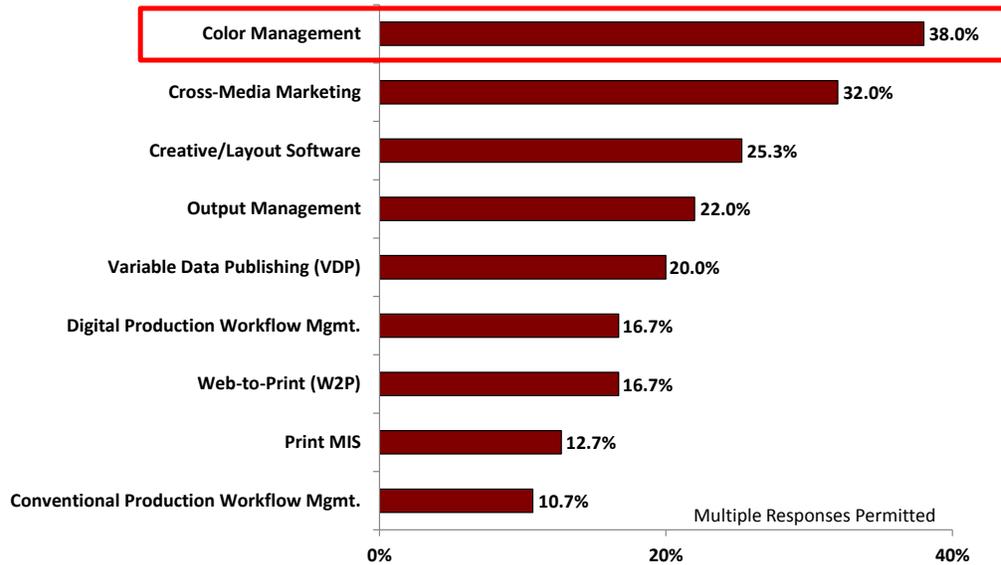
² Data provided by Executive Press, October 2014

When managing jobs across multiple devices, handling different media types throughout the prepress and production processes can be a real challenge. It used to be necessary to maintain a separate media catalog in each of the systems in prepress and production, but PRISMAsync enables the use of a centralized media catalog and informs the operator when media should be uploaded for a certain job. Printing on the wrong media type is now a thing of the past for Executive Press.

The PRISMAsync controller also makes it easier to manage colors for each individual job with its on-board intelligent color management system. This component is crucial for maintaining the color expectations of Executive Press' customers! The intelligent color management system links different color profiles to different media types. This is important because color output is strongly influenced by the type of media that is used for printing. Using the right color profile helps ensure that the colors printed on a particular media match industry standards like SWOP, Fogra, and GRACoL. Dave Allen notes, "Many of our clients are very particular about color, because they are a reflection of brand and they have to be exactly right time after time, from one order to the next. Non-matching color is unacceptable to our clients, but this was an issue that we couldn't fix with our old system. With Canon's PRISMAsync controller, the colors match customers' expectations."

Recent industry research indicates that Executive Press is not alone in this regard—color management is a priority for a number of commercial printing companies. According to InfoTrends’ report entitled *U.S. Production Software Investment Outlook 2014*, color management software is the top investment consideration among commercial printers.

Figure 3: Which of the following software products are you considering for purchase?



N = 150 Print-for-Pay Respondents

Source: *U.S. Production Software Investment Outlook*, InfoTrends 2014

Executive Press places a great deal of stock in its technologies and credits them with its success to date. The elimination of unnecessary work has enabled the firm to become a very cost-effective supplier. Allen notes, “Cost is everything to our customers, and we simply wouldn’t be able to compete price-wise if we were still working the technologies that we had 6 or 7 years ago. All of our equipment is completely state-of-the-art, and Executive Press can compete with anyone else in the market. I honestly don’t think we’d still be in business today if we didn’t have this technology!”

Big Expectations for the Future

Moving forward, Executive Press plans to meet its next 25 years with even more digital devices. Although offset technology is still the best bet for longer runs, this gap is closing all the time. Approximately 40% of Executive Press’ business is digital today, and this share will increase as digital technology becomes more competitive in relation to offset.

The Bottom Line

Executive Press has grown by leaps and bounds since opening its doors a quarter of a century ago, and much of its success can be attributed to an unwavering commitment to high quality, fast turnaround times, and competitive prices. By keeping close tabs on market shifts and the evolving demands of its customers, the company can make the best possible equipment investments. Additionally, Executive Press never overlooks what it considers its greatest asset—its people. Dave Allen concludes, “We learned a long time ago that we’re really in the business of building relationships. Everyone on our staff is committed to providing excellent customer service and delivering high-quality products and services. By purchasing great equipment and employing great people, we’ve been able to form long-term relationships with our customers. We’re not just another printing company—we’re a trusted and valued strategic partner.”

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