

ACCESS LASERPRESS BUILDS SURVEY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM WITH XEROX DOCUTECH AND DATA SCANNING

At the heart of every business is a product or service that meets a need.

Growing a business, whether an existing firm or a start up, is contingent upon delivering a "better" product or service—and doing it more cost effectively than the competition.

In 1991, Access Laserpress, Inc., then a small Phoenix-based printing company, obtained the first Xerox DocuTech 135 Network Printer delivered in Arizona. The power of Xerox technology enabled the firm to achieve significant competitive advantages in the region's document and manual production market. Access soon developed a reputation for providing superior document production services in a variety of markets nationwide.

NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY ARISES

A New York Stock Exchange-listed corporation was surveying approximately one million American business professionals annually on behalf of various product manufacturers. It used multiple versions of the same basic survey, with content varying by business category.

Four vendors supported the survey production process. One printing company in the Southwest provided typesetting and web offset printing. Another printer handled personalization of live incentive checks incorporated into the surveys. Once the surveys were mailed, a third firm on the East Coast received the completed copies and shipped them to a service bureau in the Caribbean, which entered the survey data into a database.

Access saw an opportunity to streamline this time-honored but highly fragmented, time-consuming process. Access proposed to assume single-source responsibility for the entire survey management program and turn it into a cohesive, technologically efficient system.

DEVISING AN INTEGRATED SOLUTION

The length of each survey varied across the different business categories. While all the surveys required folding, the larger ones also required saddle-stitching.

Each survey was directed to a specific individual, whose responses were tracked over time. Even a slight error in data entry could lead to a highly misleading data profile. Survey questions were also subject to significant modification biannually. Certain questions appeared in all surveys, while others appeared only in specific categories.

Roughly 1.5 million forms were produced each year. Every page in each form required variable data imprinting, resulting in nearly six million variable impressions annually.

While Access had added finishing and fulfillment services to its list of capabilities, the production challenges inherent in the survey production process were formidable.

Traditional web offset printing was deemed the most expedient facilitator for this massive production process. To meet the project requirements for efficient personalization, Access developed a customized program to generate output for printing on their Xerox DocuTech 6180s.

Another key requirement to address was how to accurately capture roughly 10,000,000 pieces of information annually from returned surveys. Access determined that data scanning combined with newly available data capture software was the best solution.

SOLUTION IMPLEMENTATION

During the early implementation phase, Access identified numerous ways in which to achieve additional production efficiencies. Access suggested, and the client approved, transforming the basic survey into a 9 by 14-inch, DocuTech-compatible format. This immediately resulted in saving three days of print time, in addition to reducing paper, ink, and labor costs. The new surveys could be inserted into smaller, less-expensive envelopes, resulting in an \$80,000 annual reduction in postage fees. Since Access now handles all data processing itself, the cost of shipping completed surveys overseas has been eliminated.

The client had required approximately seven weeks to typeset and proof the surveys, so the

timeframe for altering survey content was limited. A change of even one question required manual editing of each affected survey, which often led to content errors. To decrease such errors, Access migrated to a database typesetting process. Access now creates typeset proofs in two days following confirmation of the content. Once Access assumed responsibility for typesetting, the client's staff was able to focus its attention back to its core business of generating survey content and away from production issues.

Access prepares digital masters for offset printing once the typeset proofs are approved. A third-party vendor under contract to Access delivers survey check blanks imprinted with MICR codes and serialized check numbers. All pages with survey questions are barcoded to identify the survey category and the pages within the survey.

Each quarter, Access receives data from its client containing approximately 350,000 names, addresses, and specialty codes. The data is loaded into an Oracle database and scrubbed using a U.S. Postal Service Coding Accuracy Systems Service (CASS) approved certification program, ensuring that all addresses actually exist and satisfy postal requirements for presort discounts. Access sorts the final list to take advantage of discounted mail rates and then prints it in proper mailing sequence. No additional sorting is required.

After any damaged or ruined pages are reprinted, assembled surveys are inserted into window envelopes and delivered to the post office for mailing.

ACCESS LASERPRESS SOLVES THE SURVEY MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE

Access devised a system that harnesses the power of intelligent character recognition to better harvest survey responses and provide the client with more efficient data acquisition.

Each quarter, Access gathers data from over 100,000 individual survey pages. Each survey page is scanned to collect its unique ID, survey category, page number, and all responses. Data is properly sequenced, regardless of the order in which page data is entered. Single-page reports on survey production status are printed on a Xerox DocuPrint N24 and delivered to the client along with the corresponding databases.

Access reports that the data capture process is 98.5 percent accurate.

ACCESS GENERATES NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

The efficient marriage of lithographic web offset printing and high-speed DocuTech laser printing, combined with highly accurate finishing, mailing, tracking, and reporting, constitutes the creation of a highly integrated new service niche for Access.

Their turnkey survey management program represents a fresh approach to serving an existing market fraught with inefficiencies. As a result, Access has seen its survey management revenues grow significantly since 1997.

Access now promotes this highly specialized service to the market research community nationwide. It also leverages the experience gained in developing this solution to promote its problem-solving skills when pitching potential clients in other arenas. "We have the ability to respond to a wide range of complex, one-to-one business and communication challenges thanks to our ability to integrate new and existing information processing technologies with our DocuTechs," said Access Laserpress, Inc., President David Seid.

To support expansion associated with the survey management business, Access recently acquired, renovated, and moved into a 28,000-square-foot facility and has acquired two more DocuTechs: a second DocuTech 6180 Publisher and a DocuTech 6100 Publisher.



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