



Case Study on the Transformative Printing Business

Dr. John R. Craft, Professor

Appalachian State University, United States

Dr. Thomas H. Spotts, Associate Professor

Ball State University, United States

The Need for this Study

- The services of printing businesses in the United States have changed
 - Customer/Market driven
 - Technology driven
 - Economy driven
 - Social/Mobile media interactive driven
- It was reported by Jackie Bland, Managing Director of PRIMIR, “new communication platforms such as interactive communication is causing leading industry printing firms to create a new business model, thus transforming services towards a channel-agnostic, cross-media content delivery platform.”
- Bland further elaborated by saying that “the world has entered an era of interactivity where media usage converges.”

Methodology

- Case study research design
 - Interviews
 - Observation of company
- Identifying a case study subject
 - Based on perceived transformation print business characteristics
 - New services/products
 - Not just print

The Company



Company Information

- Brad Masai, President of Wentworth Printing in West Columbia, South Carolina [young, energetic executive, knows the print market extremely well, familiar with the vision of CGX and its founder, Joe Davis]
- Wentworth is one of 70 companies in the Consolidated Graphics group. (CGX has a 6000 plus employees.)
- There are sixty-two full time employees at Wentworth. Over twenty additional employees are hired from temporary employment agencies, bringing the total numbers of employees up to 80—or a yearly average of 80 employees. Some of the “temp” employees gain enough experience to advance to full time employment.




Printing capabilities

- *Four digital presses (two are HP5000 Indigos)*
- *“There are four 40” offset presses—three Komori and one Heidelberg.”*
- *“Additionally, there are two Heidelberg QuickMaster Offset Presses.”*




How many employees are on the managerial track?

- Fourteen of the employees in the Leadership Development Program (LDP)
- Recruited from universities (Minimum of 3.0 GPA requirement)
- LDPs are also referred to as *Associates*
- Upon completing the program, the Associate transitions to leadership level positions with CGX. Success as an LDP is based on the individual—“every individual has their own scale as to what they want to become”—however, it must fit within the mission of corporation.
- An example is an individual may have as a personal goal to move into top management by running a company, working in sales, or operations. Some of the Associates may choose to specialize in technology or accounting paths.
- “The success of the program is with those that are achieving their goal. Twenty-five of the seventy companies are run by associates, starting as young as 26 years of age.”



What do you think is most important for inclusion in university graphic communications curriculum in preparing students for a career in a transformed printing business?

- *“It is an evolution of the printing business—a continuation of a process that started with Gutenberg, to offset printing, to all the variables in between.”*
- *“Our company is experiencing multiple evolutions that involve careful strategies to address change. A plan is necessary to anticipate change that occurs in the industry.”*
- *“Students should know the Adobe Creative Suite Products!”*
- *“Students should also learn to adapt within a business; be able to wear several hats. For example, be able to work in accounting, estimating, customer service, plan and schedule jobs.”*



In your opinion, do you think that your company is in transformation due to rapid changes in technology?

- *“Yes. Presently sales of digital print are 19% of CGX sales, a 3% increase from the previous year.”*
- *“Eighty-one percent of the sales are based on traditional offset and flexo print processes. Growth experienced at CGX is due to investments in new technology, such as high-speed inkjets and expanded services, such as Web2Print.”*

What do you believe are some characteristics of a transformative printing business?

- *“Characteristics of a transformative print business have to do with making wise decisions.*
- *“Joe Davis has a vision to increase the technology infrastructure of CGX by gradually shifting jobs to digital printing presses as a means for a modernized print workflow. This is necessary to meet the demand of customers wanting high quality low volume printing with quick turnarounds.”*
- Mr. Davis realized that the digital printing of jobs was necessary in the late 90s as digital printing devices advanced and were being acquired by commercial printing businesses.

Recommendations for further study

- More companies should be examined using a multiple or collective case study design
- Further or longitudinal observations for collecting more in-depth data

Resources

- National Printing Equipment Association
 - <http://www.npes.org/whoweare/aboutus.aspx>
- Premier Market Research Association of the Graphic Arts/Communications Industry
 - <http://www.npes.org/primirresearch/primir.aspx>

Thank You for attending our presentation!

- John R. Craft
 - craftjr@appstate.edu
- Thomas H. Spotts
 - tspotts@bsu.edu