BlitZprint inc.   The Publishing Experts

BLITZPRINT CASE STUDY

SITUATION

Blitzprint is a mid-sized operation that has been in business in the same building in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, for over 30 years. That doesn't mean they haven't evolved and grown, however. Blitzprint now has three, distinct divisions:

- Their original commercial printing division
- A book division, which they started 15 years ago
- And, a new targeted marketing division, which they soft-launched last year

Blitzprint's book division (www.blitzprint.com) was one of the first major Canadian self-publishing operations back when it began 20 years ago, and it is still a significant force in Canadian, short-run book manufacturing.

Their commercial printing division is somewhat unique in the industry in that it has no salespeople and no website; however, they do considerable targeted marketing. Blitzprint reaches customers and prospects with targeted marketing, which drives them to personalized landing pages specific to their needs. Blitzprint owner, Kevin Lanuke, chose this direction over a general-audience website because he didn't want to look like everyone else. His results prove his approach works.

Kevin is now applying what he learned from his targeted marketing to help a new class of customers with his Marketing division. This year he will put his marketing expertise behind hard launching it now that his MIS system is in place.

BlitZprint inc.

Blitzprint Inc. is not your average printer. For over 30 years, it's been their mission to marry the finest contemporary printing and book-manufacturing technologies with the best in traditional, personal service. They know their clients need the speed, efficiency and high quality of state-of-the-art digital-imaging systems. Blitzprint's clients benefit from direct and easy access to skilled, helpful and enthusiastic people. Blitzprint knows printing. Blitzprint knows publishing.

CHALLENGE

Blitzprint was a long-time user of Avanti Classic, and Kevin still believes that "Classic 14.0 is a great piece of software," but it did not meet his evolving needs. Blitzprint now has separate divisions with very different operational requirements. Furthermore, Kevin tasks each division manager to run their division as independent businesses with profit and loss responsibility. He needed an MIS system with the ability to segregate his different divisions and to scale accordingly.

- His commercial division requires extensive fulfillment capabilities with seamless integration to WooCommerce and uStore.

- His commercial printing division requires a system that can support a myriad of complex orders with multiple jobs per order which incorporate both production and pick-list items.

- And, his new marketing services division requires a system which integrates with XMPie uStore and can handle various professional services and campaigns that run for months or even years.

Division managers, CSRs, and floor workers need to be able to use the system to do their jobs efficiently. In contrast, senior management and accounting need to invoice, bill, and manage the business as a whole. Kevin spent over a year investigating MIS alternatives and determined Avanti Slingshot was the best fit for his business.

> "All companies who have inventory and fulfillment requirements should take a serious look at the Slingshot inventory module. The end to end fulfillment workflow is one of the best modules/features inside Slingshot. Not managing the workflow efficiently can eat up profits quickly."
> **Kevin Lanuke, Owner, Blitzprint**

SOLUTION

Mr. Lanuke performed due diligence researching numerous MIS alternatives, including a week at the Avanti User Group Conference. There, he met with Avanti employees ranging from developers to senior executives. That in-depth learning experience convinced him that Avanti Slingshot would support his three different divisions as separate businesses linked together.

Now, with Avanti Slingshot, each of Blitzprint's divisions has unique workflows and P&L statements linked into the shared database. Each division can now easily set up general ledger account codes to segment finance reporting in whatever manner they desire, and their people can enter the right GL account codes without excessive effort. Their new MIS system has been set up with automated job streams to keep this simple.

They can now handle multiple jobs per order, which is especially important for their Marketing Division, which deals with campaigns and services rather than print orders. There are specialized Slingshot dashboards for the Marketing Division and each campaign.

Fulfillment was a primary reason why Blitzprint switched MIS systems, and it has been a success. Blitzprint was running business-as-usual within a month of going live with Slingshot. They use Slingshot's fulfillment contract module to automate orders received through WooCommerce. The job stream now connects to products in the catalog, which link to items in the MIS system. This connectivity means that orders come in, and Slingshot bypasses the CSRs completely, automatically sending pick tickets to the warehouse where they pick, pack, and ship. This streamlined process saves time and reduces errors.

Another example of their Avanti Slingshot success in fulfillment involves invoicing. Kevin's team used to spend five to ten hours each month, compiling and creating invoices. Slingshot reduces that time to five to ten minutes. That alone results in $4,000 to $8,000 in annual savings based on a $65 budgeted hourly rate. Also, those prior invoicing times did not include audits and manual inventory checks when there were inconsistencies and errors. Those could add up to additional hours each month, which no longer happens. And, the Blitzprint CSRs never fully trusted their prior system, which meant that they frequently had to check with the warehouse manager while placing orders because they didn't trust the counts. This process added even more staff time performing tasks that no longer occur with Slingshot.

The Blitzprint Commercial Printing Division tracks statuses on everything from RFQs, order statuses, job statuses, invoicing, and shipping. Every team member from CSRs to production, bindery, and shipping workers now know where jobs are in the shop when they are late, and where they need to go next through their dashboards.

OBSERVATIONS

- Defining a status roadmap of all your potential statuses (RFQ, order status, job status, invoice, shipping, etc.) is critical. The amount of effort you put in before you go live determines how much you get out afterward.

- Many islands need to be connected well to make the system work smoothly. Avanti Slingshot's integration is a true integration, which is crucial for success.

- Successful adoption is cultural as well as technological. Workers have to trust the system, the information, their coworkers, and their management. The underlying MIS system's integration and reliability are paramount to building this trust.

> "If anybody has any inventory warehousing requirements, I think that the fulfillment module inside of Slingshot can be the biggest selling piece now because it's running well. And, if you aren't running it (fulfillment) efficiently, you aren't making money."
> **Kevin Lanuke, Owner, Blitzprint**

FUTURE

Kevin's next goal is to have his Commercial Printing Division become docketless and eliminate job jackets and most samples within the next six months. His CSRs, prepress, bindery all have dashboards, and the staff is looking at them all the time. Since his people use their dashboards, there is less running through the shop searching for jobs and inserting changes.

Kevin says that "The system allowed me to put my vision within it. It lives and breathes my business so that it doesn't take me as much work to help guide everybody." He feels that he could easily pull his book division out of this company and set it up down the road if needed or even take extended leave without his business stopping. However, instead, he is focusing on growing his business because he can see a window of opportunity he couldn't see before. He will now spend his time selling and bringing in new business opportunities and clients. And, he doesn't anticipate additional people if and when he acquires a large account because the system takes care of everybody.

avanti SLINGSHOT®

BENEFITS AT A GLANCE

The central systems unifies all aspects of the business, including chargebacks and reducing re-keying and human error

Capably manage increasing order volume of 50+ orders/day

Alerts and notifications keep everyone in the know about incoming work and issues, improving productivity and customer responsiveness

Constant billing increases customer satisfaction

Crucial transparency of the print job-level information including details of times, change orders, and delivery charges

Reduced order input errors with web-to-print integrations leveraging industry protocols such as JDF and XML

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WE HAVE ANSWERS®

At Avanti, our goal is to help you deliver more jobs, in less time, with the confidence in knowing that every aspect of your shop is integrated into one powerful platform.

Award-winning, JDF-certified Avanti Slingshot® allows for the sophistication required by today's Print and Marketing Services Providers. The platform is able to manage multiple lines of business, handle large/grand format, digital and offset print, as well as mail and fulfillment workflows.

Connect islands of automation, eliminate breakpoints in your workflow, and get the information you want – when you want it, and where you want it – easily, with Avanti Slingshot®.

From order entry through to production and billing, Avanti Slingshot enables you to work more efficiently, control your costs and move more jobs through the shop with ease.

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