RSA ROCHESTER SOFTWARE ASSOCIATES

Publishers' Graphics

Printing Books Without Boundaries

"RSA's QDirect enabled us to bring it all together. It doesn't see any boundaries. There are no barriers to keep us from constantly moving forward."

Nick Lewis,
President

Challenges	Solution	Results
• Reduce costs and find ways to achieve best practices while growing • Support volume that current workflows couldn't meet • Manual, error-prone, and time consuming process for job processing	• QDirect™ - Comprehensive job routing and output manager • Make Ready Integration for QDirect	• 87% reduction in turnaround time - 5 to 7 days versus 40 days • Jobs printed on any printer as needed; ticketed appropriately • 65% volume increase - 350-400 orders daily • Managing and routing jobs to remote sites

Customer Background/Solution Overview

Founded in 1996 and headquartered in Carol Stream, IL, near Chicago, Publishers' Graphics is one of the nation's largest short run book printing companies. Focusing on innovation and quality, the company operates in several markets, including individuals/self-published authors, and publishers, both small and large. With their online services, on-demand print offerings and distribution services, Publishers' Graphics delivers customized services for their customers and is changing book printing "one book at a time."

The company's founder and President, Nick Lewis, knew that operating in the on-demand print industry and offering a wide variety of publications and book types required optimizing workflow to allow the organization to grow profitably. Lewis identified a number of areas for improvement that would allow them to reduce costs and achieve best practices while increasing volume capabilities. The major hurdles were eliminating manual job processes and workflows that left room for error, decreased productivity, and didn't allow for their variety of production devices across multiple locations to be utilized to their full potential.

"Because of our experience and understanding of what it takes for a workflow to be profitable, we look for the best way possible to drive costs out of the process. In printing, everyone has their own song to sing. It takes more than a press, it takes embracing technology. We 'get it'. We have a lot of experience, did our homework, and understand technology," stated Lewis.

After conducting thorough research, Lewis opted for RSA's QDirect Output Manager.

Lewis commented, "Based on our research, we liked RSA's QDirect for its versatility and the way we saw that we could grow with it. We built a system and process specifically for the business, rather than adapt a current process. From there, we have built and are growing the company around it. With all the systems working in place, it's scary how easy it is!"

Pulling it all together and sending it anywhere

With about 30 employees in two US locations, and additional distribution services through partnerships in London, Australia, and Germany, it was important for Publishers' Graphics to be able to easily route jobs to an array of printers from various vendors based on job specifications.

Lewis was operating in a mixed equipment and software vendor environment, had jobs from a vendor-specific workflow tool, and had multiple vendors involved in the project to streamline the book printing workflow.

In a traditional book printing setting, the book order and fulfillment process is at least six steps. The book publisher takes customer orders, sends the book orders to the book printer to print, the printer prints to books, the printer ships the books to a book distributor, and then the distributor ships the book to the end customer. In this short run operation, a new program was needed to print and deliver books directly to end customers, a process that is often print one book and ship one book.

Recognizing the importance of an internal central project driver that understood technology, Publishers' drove the project's process and knew what they wanted to accomplish. They documented the process and learned from it. Lewis stated "During this process, RSA was great. Other firms just did not seem to have resources, but RSA did."

"With QDirect, we can push work wherever we want to go based on best practices," continues Lewis. "It has enabled us to bring it all together across a multitude of printers in any array anywhere we want to print. It does not see boundaries and there are no barriers from moving forward. Some vendors have processes that are proprietary to their systems. Not RSA. It unlocks the barriers that can occur in the workflow. RSA simplifies sending to a backend, no matter where it is."

Growing the business profitably one book at a time—and still growing

Publisher's Graphics has optimized their software and hardware technology to simplify, automate, and reduce costs and shorten turnaround.

Before adding QDirect, a typical book order could take up to 40 days to fulfill, and used a manual process touched by 10 people. Now, it is a straight-through, hands-free process from order to printing in 5-7 days. That's an 87% decrease in turnaround time! In addition to reducing "touches" and turnaround, productivity has increased. The firm is using QDirect to profitably handle 350-400 orders daily across locations—a 65% volume increase without adding staff. Jobs can be easily routed and directed to any printer anywhere as needed, including remote sites, with job ticketing.

"The biggest benefit I've received is being able to make printing one book profitable by using the software that I have. I can just push all those orders through!" explains Lewis. "We've dumped tons of books into the system. We pushed the envelope beyond where anyone thought it would go, and it's taken it all! And, I like the extras like putting in key words for searching, transferring paper, trim size, etc."

"Because we keep growing, it's really important that we optimize our workflow and processes by using software that works with the hardware that we have. The solution we have affords itself toward growth. When we last added a new location, it went from eight months to two weeks to get the new site up and running. I love that it is easy to add a printer or location. When I buy something, RSA writes the back end and we're online. I go into QDirect, make a simple change, make it applicable and I'm up and running."

Lewis concludes, "I don't see any boundaries between me and Publishers' Graphics meeting our goals."

"QDirect is robust and RSA's service is great. RSA is willing to customize the software based on what I need and helped me optimize it for my situation. Not many vendors will do that."

Nick Lewis,
President

Equipment

- Xerox, multiple printers
- Konica Minolta, multiple printers
- Canon, multiple printers

Statistics

Orders: 350-400 daily
Titles: 300-800 titles produced daily
Volume: 1,000-2,000 daily
Location: multiple US locations; partnerships in Europe and Australia
Average book run: 3 books