Empowered workflow

But for cross-media programs to be profitable, correct color and personalized web sites are not enough. The workflow used must automate as many steps as possible so that jobs can run efficiently.

"Using XMPie as part of the FreeFlow suite of services is incredibly important from an operational and efficiency perspective," notes Cooney.

With these tools, ColorCentric is able to optimize how they send jobs into the production environment. For example, the FreeFlow VI suite, enabled through Xerox's high-performance VIPP® architecture, allows them to batch-process individual variable data jobs, resulting in a much more efficient and manageable workflow for their production staff who have to move large amounts of paper from printing to trimming to distribution.

Cooney says this, along with the accurate color on the iGen3, provides a comfort level that evidences itself on a day-to-day basis. "It assures us that we are really a partner with Xerox, and we can in turn extend that same comfort level to our customers because we know Xerox will be behind us every step of the way."

The iGen3 at ColorCentric uses the DocuSP RIP to provide consistent and accurate color.

Exceptional results

The combination of the tightly coordinated, colorful, compelling mailing, the response URL, personalized web pages and the follow-up e-mail combined to deliver exceptional results for PANTONE. And it has encouraged the company to plan further highly targeted cross-media campaigns in the future.

"PANTONE was absolutely thrilled with the bottom line," recounts Hatkoff. "It enhanced our growth in product sold from the previous quarter by 81 percent and by forecast about 13 percent. In addition, we were able to get information and market intelligence we can use in the next campaign to make it more unique to each customer."

Power for a changing business

"Because of what Xerox has done in trying to move this outside of the commercial print world and into the enterprise and into the agencies there is far greater acceptance of using these technologies than there was just 18 months ago," says John Cole.

Littrell agrees, pointing out that printers producing almost any type of marketing materials need to realize they are in a communications value chain of which print is only one part.

"If you don't do this now," affirms Hatkoff, "the world will pass you by. It's services, it's value-add. As a print provider it's absolutely imperative that you embrace strategies for one-to-one marketing, and tools like the Xerox FreeFlow Suite, with XMPie and DocuSP."

Workflow Drives Cross-Media Success

Company Profile

PANTONE, Inc., is the world-renowned authority on color and provider of color systems and leading technology for the selection and accurate communication of color. The PANTONE name is known worldwide as the standard language for color communication from designer to manufacturer to retailer to customer. With over 40 years of experience, PANTONE, based in Carlstadt, N.J., is the worldwide market leader in color communication and color technology for the graphic design, printing, publishing, textile and plastics industries.

The best way to seize the attention of graphic designers is with compelling or unusual images, especially in color. And when the message is personalized and poses the question, "Are you this confident in your color?" it focuses their attention and drives them to look further. That's exactly what PANTONE®, the company that's synonymous with precise color, did in reaching out to art directors and graphic designers in a recent—and impressively successful—cross-media direct marketing campaign.

Chips and a Spyder

One of the challenges of digital printing has been assuring artists and designers that the colors produced by a digital device such as the Xerox iGen3® Digital Production Press will match the ones they chose. Digital press manufacturers have sought to become "PANTONE certified," the badge of honor showing their press has been tested and approved as capable of accurately and consistently producing a very high percentage of PANTONE's vast palette of colors. But it takes more than just validation of a print engine to gain this highly valued accolade.

"When we certify a digital press, we actually certify the entire system: the press, the RIP and all workflow software that drives it," explains Andy Hatkoff, Vice President of Marketing Communications at PANTONE. "Working with Xerox, we also produce a 'Digital Chips' book that shows the relationship between a solid PANTONE color and how it will appear on an offset press versus its appearance on a Xerox iGen3 or other Xerox DocuColor® device."

The Digital Chips books are a big help to designers, but those who want the most accurate color need to know that the color they see on their computer monitor will be the same as that on the pages coming off a specific Xerox DocuColor press. This is especially true for spot colors that have long been hard to produce accurately and consistently on a digital press.

The Digital Chips book helps designers compare Pantone colors produced on different presses.

Reaching out

"We have a product called the PANTONE® ColorVision Spyder™. It's a monitor calibration tool for anyone who is serious about color," explains Hatkoff. "We'd marketed the Spyder through the traditional channels: on our web site, through catalogs and mail order. We felt it was time to find another way to educate our customers about monitor calibration and gather some information about who our customers are and how they work."

To do that, PANTONE worked with Rick Littrell, CMO of MagiComm, a marketing consulting firm in Groveland, Mass., to develop a program that would use personalization and cross-media marketing to reach out to graphic designers in a new and compelling way.

"PANTONE had never done a campaign that integrated multiple media that leveraged all the different technologies and increased the touch points with the customer," relates Littrell.

Littrell knew what was needed to create an effective campaign, and also knew the creative had to be especially powerful to have the desired impact on graphic design professionals. So he called on Cole Creative, a Boston, Mass., graphic communications agency with the experience needed to develop and execute the program PANTONE wanted. Working together, they selected the Xerox Personalized Communications solution and iGen3 press to create and produce the campaign for PANTONE.

The solution utilizes the FreeFlow™ VI Suite and DocuSP® integrated with XMPie® PersonalEffect cross-media, one-to-one software modules.

Automation essential

"Traditional marketing programs usually try to get multiple touch points, reaching customers and prospects in several ways," says John Cole of Cole Creative. "For this program we used postcards, follow-up e-mails and a personalized web site. That makes for a lot of moving parts, and what XMPie does is automate the process of tying all these together."

"One of the most dynamic features of this program was that we used a personalized response URL with the individual's name," continues Cole.

Beginning with a compiled database of graphic designers, photographers and art directors, the personalized postcards were prepared for production using XMPie's uCreate and uProduce software, together with the FreeFlow VI Suite enabled by Xerox VIPP®, and then printed on a Xerox iGen3 at ColorCentric in Rochester, N.Y. One side of each postcard bore the recipient's name, a colorfully tattooed model, and a line asking them how confident they were with the colors they used. To ensure maximum impact in multi-person agencies and studios, one designer or art director would receive a different postcard or e-mail than his or her counterpart across the hall.

The other side of the card had a picture of the PANTONE ColorVision Spyder, copy about color management, and a personalized URL. Entering the link into their browser brought the recipient to a personalized web site created on the fly using XMPie software. The colors and images they saw on the

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> John Cole, Cole Creative

Personalized landing pages are created on the fly.

site were identical to those contained in the mailer. Visitors to the site had the opportunity to purchase a Spyder, enter a contest to win a $1,500 PANTONE reference library, and were asked a short series of questions about their work and associated color management needs. Shortly after visiting the site they received a follow-up e-mail, also driven by XMPie software, bearing the same colors and images used on their postcard and personalized web page.

Data Challenges and Advantages

While the Xerox iGen3 delivered outstanding color quality and the FreeFlow/XMPie solution delivered excellent results, the data was a challenge. Littrell recalls a number of problems with the data, which was a compilation of names from a variety of sources. The issues ranged from incomplete names and titles to data field errors to undeliverable addresses.

This underscores the critical importance of ensuring that all the data used in a cross-media campaign is completely accurate. In fact, one of the key advantages a cross-media campaign can deliver is the ability to gather accurate information through the personalized web pages. Using a short questionnaire, companies can collect information

that can be used in future campaigns, which is exactly what PANTONE plans to do with the data it collected.

"It tells us more about our customers so we can make the next e-mail, direct mail or cross-media campaign more targeted," says Hatkoff. "And more targeted means more effective."

Critical color

Since the mailing was going out to seasoned designers with critical eyes for color it was essential that all the colors on the mailer be absolutely correct. Littrell and Cole chose ColorCentric because it had three iGen3s driven by the Xerox DocuSP front end—the only RIP for the iGen3 that is PANTONE-certified.

"We use the fact that the DocuSP RIP is PANTONE-certified as one of our primary quality control checks on the device," asserts Andy Cooney, Vice President of Business Development at ColorCentric. "It's a check we make several times a day on all of our iGens so that we know we are replicating color consistently."

For ColorCentric, which also uses its iGen3s to produce full-color books, the PANTONE certification and the broad palette of colors are vital to their business.

"In traditional printing you have one-, two-, four- or even six-color presses. We think of the iGen3 with its DocuSP RIP and PANTONE certification as an n-color press. By that we mean you can have a four-color image, an RGB image and 10 spot colors, all on a single page, and we'll replicate them all. That's why we chose the iGen3 and why we think the DocuSP RIP is the premiere RIP in the industry."

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>
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