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— David McGrath, CMI

Company Profile

Starting with a simple classified advertisement in Sports Afield magazine in 1962, Cabela’s has grown to become the largest and most recognized name in outdoor mail-order. By continuing to embrace the philosophy that the customer is No. 1, the family-owned “World’s Foremost Outfitter” has built an empire of direct mail, retail stores, e-commerce and outdoor advocacy.

The Cabela’s catalog is the heart of the company. It is produced entirely internally, a surprisingly rare approach in even large direct mail companies. Every aspect of copywriting, photography, typesetting, merchandising, product evaluation, warehousing, and shipping is performed inhouse by Cabela’s employees. Catalogs are shipped to each of the fifty states and 120 countries, with over sixty million mailed each year.

In support of the catalog operation, Cabela’s has established large retail centers that bring a new sense of scale to the idea of shopping as a destination. Built around the theme of bringing the outdoors inside, the stores feature lifelike game trophies, indoor mountains, waterfalls, educational centers, restaurants, gun libraries, and travel agencies! The store in Sidney, Nebraska is the state’s largest tourist attraction, and



it is expected that the 200,000 square-foot store in Dundee, Michigan will achieve the same distinction in that state.

The Solution

The number of data assets in the Cabela's catalog production workflow requires an engineering solution that addresses workflow optimization and asset management needs. The company chose WAVE Corporation and MediaBank to solve the problem.

"We require a solution that keeps the creative staff's network and data overhead lightweight," notes Mike Rowland, Manager of Quality, Systems, and Imaging. "MediaBank provides the best Mac-based image production workflow, allowing us to integrate many different server processes into one contiguous loop."

Cabela's stores 125,000 images in the MediaBank image library, making them accessible to the one hundred and fifteen creative staff who generate the catalog pages. Vector graphics are stored in a separate MediaBank database to meet the unique requirements of that data type. Images are made accessible to a separate web development group for incorporation into the Cabela's online catalog as needed.

Creative group management decided to configure MediaBank Job Jackets at the catalog version and page level, allowing granular control over assets. Users check documents into and out of the system, using

MediaBank's permission-based security to control access. When documents are completed, they are sent to an AppleScripted print queue system which is integrated with Intersep OPI and load balances jobs across several output devices. Cabela's also employs MediaBank's volume management features to set up overflow volumes and automate the process of maximizing valuable network storage space.

The Future

"MediaBank is still the best product on the market to implement the workflows that we require in prepress production," adds Rowland. The growth and success that Cabela's has enjoyed do not come by accident, and WAVE is proud to be a part of the story of the world's largest outdoor gear outfitter. ♦

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