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— Tim Iorlano, Quebecor World

Company Profile

Quebecor World George Rice and Sons is a division of Quebecor World located in Los Angeles CA. Quebecor World operates a diverse manufacturing platform, providing a mix of pre-media services; gravure, offset, and sheetfed printing; finishing, logistics, and distribution. With 2003 sales in excess of \$6 billion, It is one of the world’s largest printing operations, employing nearly 40,000 people.

Business Opportunity

Leveraging its Los Angeles location, one of the key target markets for George Rice is the entertainment industry. In the Fall of 2003, one of the company’s major entertainment clients was looking to consolidate suppliers by migrating some of its outsourced prepress services to a full-service print provider and turned to George Rice for a solution. At the time George Rice had no digital asset management services in place, and coincidentally, was planning a major server upgrade. According to Tim Iorlano, Prepress Manager, “The stars aligned—we were running on a less than optimum server configuration and we had a major client that needed new bells and whistles. The time was right for us to invest.”

The Solution

At the time, the client simply wanted to replicate its existing platform, based with a European prepress provider. Tim and his team researched and found they could significantly enhance capabilities for the client by migrating them to a MediaBank platform. “RealTime Proof was a key element of the client’s European application, and MediaBank offered a clean RealTime Proof integration. MediaBank also offered a user interface that was much easier to use and much more robust.”

George Rice proceeded with its MediaBank implementation for the entertainment client. The transition went well, and there were minimal training requirements. “Change is difficult. But the users were comfortable with MediaBank

from the beginning, and once they began using it, they were addicted.”

According to Tim, the majority of the work initially transferred to the MediaBank implementation was destined for printing in Europe. The client had previously been using RealTime Proof, so that aspect of the workflow was unchanged. What the client especially liked about the new solution was the ease with which they could now more quickly locate and access the assets they needed to use.

As each new project commences, the client transfers the appropriate images to the George Rice prepress department, who then works up a generic version of the requested piece based on existing standards and guidelines. An electronic review and revision process is then initiated with an e-mail to the client. Client creative resources then access materials via MediaBank and RealTime Proof, often requesting that images and type be moved or other adjustments made to reach a final design. “And thus content management begins.” Applications developed using this process include DVD and VHS sleeves, as well as point of purchase materials.

To streamline the process, WAVE wrote a customized script that enables generation of a soft proof for printing on a wide variety of print engines, as well as a Revisions panel which allows the client to view the entire revision cycle for a given piece. “If there have been six rounds of corrections, all six icons pop up and they can choose any version. The client needed to be able to see the whole trail of corrections and to easily revert to previous versions if required.”

The previous system had little metadata associated with image files. With MediaBank, metadata was significantly expanded, allowing the client to view such things as time/date stamping, comments and notes, which account executives were involved in the project, and other critical information that made the workflow more effective. Most pieces undergo an average of four rounds of review and revision before they are released to production.

Results

Now that George Rice has digital asset management services available, the company is expanding its user base beyond the entertainment industry. One of the critical enablers for that expansion, is training the sales force to sell the total solution. “In selling digital asset management services, you have to come across as extremely confident. If someone is going to let you manage their assets, they need to be able to feel they can trust the integrity of the system and the qualifications of the personnel who operate that system.”

Tim views the MediaBank implementation as a critical enabler for George Rice as it works to capture more prepress work, both inside and outside of the entertainment industry. “With MediaBank and RealTime Proof, we are able to almost completely eliminate geographic barriers. Other than delivering a hardcopy proof from time to time, we can do everything electronically, especially as monitor proofing gains ground. And for those clients that require hardcopy proofs, we have the option of placing a remote, color-calibrated proofing device at their location.” ♦

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