

Prism WIN integrating business processes

Prism says integrating print production functions, workflow and JDF are key to the success of today's print business

THE functional silos of companies continue to confound the efficient activities of delivering value to customers and collecting revenue for that value. In printing companies there are often separate and distinct departments for sales, estimating, production planning, manufacturing, and accounts. Each of these departments, or silos, can prevent the smooth flow of sales orders, production, and billing as the work is tossed from silo to silo. For over 25 years Prism has worked with printing companies around the world to break down the functional silos and improve operations.

Prism's management information system, Prism WIN, is a fully integrated and complete business solution that is especially relevant for today's economy. Its industry standard architecture and analytical tools enable the best-run printing companies to break down the functional silos to create efficient, fast, and defect-free processes that quickly convert estimates to sales orders, sales orders to job tickets, and job tickets to invoices. These companies are seeing decreased cycle times in fulfilling orders and receiving payments for services. Companies like The Blue Star Print

Group, Geon, Finsbury Green, Craft Inprint Group and Hannanprint are all benefiting from breaking down the functional silos.

Prism accomplishes this through its core .NET architecture. This architecture on top of an Oracle or Microsoft SQL database allows for unprecedented integration of business functions like customer relationship management (CRM), estimating, jobbing, planning, and automated shop floor data capture as well as a number of web to print portals. And the latest release of Prism WIN includes browser-based key production indicator (KPI) reporting that ties the data from individual departments into full dashboards that capture real time business performance, to support real time decision making.

Often the functional silos in business are created specifically around business systems. It is notoriously difficult to break down the silos when there are islands of information developed over many years to support individual department at the exclusion of other areas. Prepress workflow solutions, press consoles, layout planning systems and a myriad of other systems create great efficiencies but many times at the exclusion or expense of surrounding departments. Prism understands the benefits of the islands of information and automation and has given printers the ability to break down the walls to create an integrated workflow. Through JDF connectivity to Kodak's Prinergy, Agfa's Apogee, Esko's Backstage, and

others, these islands of automation can be part of the overall business processes. Combine this with the sharing of JDF job tickets with Heidelberg, manroland, Mitsubishi and others and Prism WIN begins to create a workflow

across the functional silos. And best in class solutions such as LithoTechnics Metrix automatic layout calculator can be fully integrated into the Prism WIN workflow to drive finishing equipment directly from the MIS.

Although JDF is the accepted industry standard for sharing job information across multiple systems and manufacturers, there are still hundreds of situations in a printing company where JDF is either not available or not appropriate; bespoke solutions, legacy solutions and equipment, or systems that simply do not support JDF. These areas amongst Prism customers continue to be part of a connected workflow that isn't impeded by functional silos. Through Prism WIN Connect, these systems can be connected and integrated into a seamless workflow using industry standard protocols such as XML. In addition, legacy production equipment can be controlled and reported on by Prism WIN through QTMS, its production management solution. QTMS sends electronic job tickets to the production floor, captures spot-on production counts, and controls WIP, pallets, and finished goods movement throughout the plant. QTMS is especially relevant for web printers and other operations with significant material throughput.

The functional silos in printing companies generally do not reflect the early days of these companies when they had fewer employees and simplified processes. As businesses grow, management is divided over each functional silo – estimating manager, press room manager, bindery manager – creating impedance to the efficient flow of information, product, and profits. Prism can help the growing printer avoid this division with its WIN SBE, its Small Business Edition. WIN SBE users can benefit from a complete integrated business management system while enjoying a more structured, pre-packaged solution.

Successful businesses in today's economy are preparing for the eventual economic upturn by streamlining existing operations and processes. Prism WIN allows the most successful printers to organize and execute around processes that traverse functional silos to provide enhanced customer service.

