
CASE STUDY

ODC for Print-on-Demand Company

Customer

The customer is a print-on-demand company that is consistently ranked as one of the fastest growing American businesses. Headquartered in the United States, the Company has production facilities in USA, UK and Germany.

Background

The Company's plans for exponential growth were hamstrung by an acute shortage of operations and technology staff. To overcome these constraints, the Company considered augmenting its capacity in India. It knew that setting up its own offshore delivery center would involve incorporation of a new company, renting office space, wading through regulatory compliance and many more hassles. Keen on avoiding these headaches when its top management's attention was fully directed at scaling the business, the Company outsourced its operations to a third party vendor in India.

While the Company avoided the administrative hassles of offshoring, the move led to a severe drop in both quality and quantity of output. Since the offshore team was managed by the vendor, the Company had little control over it.

The Company was seriously contemplating its way forward in the light of the unintended consequence of its offshoring approach when one of its senior managers received a great testimonial about Rewise from a common business associate.

Scope

Rewise understood the Company's goals and set up an Offshore Delivery Center to be run by the Company as an extension of its own onsite facilities.

We handle all regulatory, administrative and support activities ranging from recruitment, renting of office space and high-speed Internet lines through to payroll processing, accounting and regulatory compliance.

Comprising chiefly of graphics designers, prepress operators and quality assurance professionals, our "Whitebox ODC" provides graphics design and prepress services for the Company's print offerings. The Company's products range from School Planners / Yearbooks, Birthday Cards, Funeral Cards and other B2C products through to Flyers, Brochures, Binders, Saddle Stitch and other B2B products.

For graphics design services, the Company's onsite sales team books new and repeat orders for School Planners / Yearbooks from schools and conveys the specifications of new and updated planners to our ODC. The graphics design team in the ODC accesses the specified graphics and text elements from a library of pre-designed templates and lays them out in the new or updated planner. The designer's output files are then submitted to the local QA team where independent proof-readers test the output against specifications. Defects, if any, are rectified by the graphics design team. When all the files are re-tested and found okay, they are packaged into a release and uploaded to the Company's Studio for proof reading.

For prepress services, the ODC receives the high resolution PDF file for brochures, flyers, saddle stitch, binders and other products. Prepress operators at the ODC add printer's marks, set the orientation and carry out other prepress activities per special instructions. Once the file is ready for printing, it is uploaded to the onsite printing facility for the print run.

Approach & Outcome

We have instituted the following measures to help the Company gain total visibility into its Whitebox ODC:

- Use of identical processes and tools in both shores
- Full control into hiring of new resources and their ongoing performance measurement
- Import of identical computers, monitors and other key equipment from the parent Company. This is critical in a process like prepress where even minor differences in hardware and software settings can cause major differences in the final output
- Shift operations matching the Company's time zones in USA and UK
- Total visibility into all elements of cost
- Cobranding of premises.

As a nod to the widely held belief that printing demands a level of precision next only to space travel, we provide a two week Precision Appreciation Training (PAT) for all our ODC staff. The program inculcates the "right first time" ethos in the employees and ingrains into them the appreciation of the fact that a lax attitude towards precision can have a telling impact on the final print product.

Thanks to this approach, the Company now has a captive-like facility without the attendant regulatory, administrative and support hassles. The ODC will generate an output of half a million master pages this year.

Technology

- Adobe InDesign CC desktop publishing
- Adobe Photoshop image creation and editing
- Adobe Illustrator logo editing and touchup
- Adobe Acrobat PDF manipulation
- PitStop Pro PDF error detection and correction
- Quite Imposing PDF imposing
- ProofHQ online proofing
- .NET & PHP web applications

Challenges& Accomplishments

Challenges	Accomplishment
Vast differences in skills of resources	Introduced a design test that examines applicants' expertise and experience on the required tools. Only those who clear this test are inducted into the ODC.
Longer time-to-market for imported equipment	Tie-ups with clearing-and-forwarding agents ensure speedy customs clearance and transportation so that delivery lead times are not hampered.
Exorbitant bandwidth costs caused by frequent movement of large design files between the offshore and onsite facilities	Set up local server at the ODC. Interim versions of files stay at the ODC. Only finished files go over the wire. This has cut

Challenges	Accomplishment
	down bandwidth costs significantly.
Communication gaps between onsite and offshore teams	ProofHQ, the online proofing tool, was rolled out at the ODC. As a result, all communications between onsite and offshore teams related to requirements, specifications and review comments happen on a single platform. Any communication gaps that still remain are easily ironed out on the daily and weekly conference calls between the dual shore teams.
Higher stay costs caused by more frequent trips to ODC	Rented a guest house in the ODC's neighborhood. This slashes hotel costs when the Company's senior managers, supervisors and trainers visit the ODC.

Future Plans

- Ramp up of the existing graphics design team to support graphics design for funeral cards and other print products
- Development and maintenance of the Company's on-demand design, proofing and printing technology platforms.

Benefits

- Trouble-free use of captive-like offshore facility
- 20% increase in productivity by dedicating resources for the ODC
- Over 98% first pass accuracy rate due to our commitment to precision
- Support for aggressive growth without breaking the bank by virtue of an innovative commercial model that goes beyond offshore cost advantage offered by others.