The five biggest "blockers" to workflow automation

Any printing business that wishes to grow successfully and deliver an increasing number of print jobs as quickly as possible has to rely on automated production processes. However, why do so many printing businesses still struggle with the topic of automation? This was the exact question addressed by the German printing industry's specialist magazine, the Deutsche Drucker, in cooperation with Impressed GmbH, in a recently-published article. The result: there are five decisive "blockers" that prevent printers from developing a path to a successful future in the print business.

Our goal in business, and the aim of all OneVision Software's team, is to develop solutions to enable printers to work more efficiently. Many customers worldwide can attest to the fact that we achieve this successfully as, not only does the implementation of our automation software result in significantly higher throughput during the prepress stage, it also enables them to benefit from significantly higher print quality.

We have effective solutions to the "blockers" named in the article, which are straightforward to implement and easy to use:

1st blocker: incompatibility

"Today, the question of interfaces is a significant criterion in our decision making when procuring new workflow components," the experts at Impressed/print.de repeatedly note.

For this reason, OneVision's software development process emphasizes open interfaces. Our solutions are all based on an XML job engine, which means that they support flexible configurations. Consequently, our experts can connect to external systems straightforwardly, with these connections taking just a few hours to create.

2nd blocker: a lack of standardization

A flawless print process with optimal print quality requires error-free print files. However, according to Impressed/print.de, *"every unnecessary, manual stage in the process inherently conceals a risk of unwanted 'individualization.'"* This 'individualization' may result in errors or increase the variability of print results. *"The use of automation for data validation and preparation standardizes the quality of production data,"* the experts explained further.

OneVision's leading prepress software Asura handles all common steps in the prepress workflow automatically: incoming print files are checked for errors, corrected, and aligned with standards, resulting in ISO-standards compliant, error-free print files; the entire PDF workflow, from the receipt of data through to file processing and generation of print data PDFs is automated and takes place within the Workflow Management System with a standardized interface to Asura. By shifting traditional RIP tasks such as flattening transparencies or reducing vector points into the prepress stage, bottlenecks during the RIP stage can be avoided. This results in a higher throughput of jobs in the prepress stage and a smoother printing process.

3rd blocker: fear of high investment costs

Many printers are reluctant to procure new software solutions due to the high cost of investment. However, *"In most cases, this fear is unfounded, as the payback period is very short,"* explain the experts of Impressed/print.de.

OneVision customers have also found this to reflect their experience. For example, Thomas Ovelgönne, Head of prepress at printing specialist Druckhaus Waiblingen, summarizes his

experience as follows: "OneVision's Workspace Pro offers us the possibility, to standardize and to automatize many processes. The acquisition paid off very quickly for us." Automation reduces error rates, significantly increases print throughput, and substantially improves profitability per job. On average, it only takes a few months to generate a return on investment. Moreover, OneVision offers the option of using a Software as a Service (SaaS) model, with the Cloud concept offering lower investment costs for customers, while enabling them to enjoy optimal performance and the latest technology. Naturally, OneVision also offers rental models that make it easier to overcome any initial investment barriers.

4th blocker: caught up in old structures

According to the experts, *"The introduction of automation workflows involves more than buying a few new software products. Instead, it requires a complete rethinking on the part of managers and employees across all departments."* The introduction of software solutions often results in the possibility to create more time for new, challenging future projects.

OneVision's Consulting Team analyses existing structures in dialogue with customers and interested parties such as printers, agencies and repro houses and develops an optimal workflow together. Through close collaboration and intensive support, this enables print businesses to introduce more efficient production processes. By automating the prepress stage, with the help of OneVision software, capacity and resources are freed to be deployed in order to achieve further differentiation from competitors, such as through the provision of enhanced customer service.

5th blocker: a lack of knowledge of what is now possible

Some decision makers *"either don't recognize or don't understand the potential of using automation solutions in a production setting,"* explain Impressed/print.de. Once this issue is overcome, many decision makers are inhibited by the risk of becoming dependent on a single system. For that reason, open systems are popular because they *"allow workflows to be planned and implemented individually."*

Due to the high degree of connectivity and the connection of all our software solutions to the extremely flexible Workspace Workflow Management System Workspace, OneVision offers the flexibility needed to adapt the software to any production requirement or environment: an open system, with an easy-to-use drag-and-drop editor to create and adapt workflows in a flash at any time, enabling job-specific production lines to be developed.

These issues are not the only ones that you can successfully solve with ease by using our software. Our Asura prepress software suite automates manual processes and the entire prepress workflow. Do the test! Our software solutions are available on a trial basis, offering you the chance to test their full range of features in depth.

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