



Image X-Press at Boston University

Boston University streamlines print production with IKON ExpressPrint

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- In-plant, on-demand print facility for Boston University
 - Size: Serves over 29,000 students and 9,000 faculty and staff
 - Location: Boston, Massachusetts
- www.bu.edu/ikoncopy

Industry

Printing

Solution

Facilities Management/
Internet On-demand

Products Used

- Adobe® Acrobat®
- Adobe PDF Transit™
- Adobe PostScript®
- IKON ExpressPrint
- Servador Webprint

In Partnership With:

IKON Office Solutions, Inc.
Servador, inc.

Company Profile

Image X-Press, operated by IKON Office Solutions, made its debut in July 2001. Formerly known as the Boston University Copy Center, Image X-Press serves over 29,000 students and 9,000 faculty and staff, and operates three facilities at Boston University (BU): a commercial store, a copy center at the Law School, and a production center for large printing and copying jobs.

Challenges Faced

Increase utilization and reduce costs

In 2002, BU and IKON began evaluating ways to increase the efficiency and utilization of their existing print center. IKON's analysts determined that web-based job submission could greatly improve site utilization by enhancing ease of use and customer service. Boston University's Assistant Vice President, Peter Fiedler comments. "IKON ExpressPrintSM fit the bill—it was easy to use and gave our faculty, staff, and students a much easier way to get jobs to the site."

IKON ExpressPrint is a private label version of Servador Webprint, an end-to-end job specification, dynamic pricing, and production tracking system that utilizes Adobe PDF Transit for Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) creation and secure Adobe PDF-based job submission. IKON and Servador worked closely on the systems requirements needed to seamlessly integrate the pricing, payment, and account management information with existing BU and Image X-Press accounting and job management systems.

"We don't have a decree from the administration, and we can't force anyone to use our services," explains Fiedler. "Above all, submitting jobs must be simple and convenient. IKON ExpressPrint has certainly satisfied both of those requirements."

Success Strategy

The Image X-Press team has made its first focus administrative staff and faculty. These are the customers who are generally less familiar with desktop publishing and electronic job submission and would therefore benefit most from the ease of use offered by IKON ExpressPrint.

IKON ExpressPrint is publicized primarily through the Image X-Press website, articles in the BU weekly newspaper, and word of mouth. Production Manager Tom Findlay has found one-on-one presentations and demos to be very effective. "Those who have a chance to try it out really like it. We are retooling now to handle more users, because we are seeing a constant increase in the volume of work."



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Peter Fiedler,
Assistant vice president,
Boston University

Business Benefits

- Attracts new business by simplifying the job submission process
- Saves substantial production time
- Increases efficiency; reduces costs and waste

A key design criterion for Servador Webprint and IKON ExpressPrint was to dramatically simplify the process of specifying and submitting print-ready Adobe PDF files, empowering people who may not be printing professionals to create and reliably produce professional-looking, print-on-demand products.

Tim Cavanaugh, staff assistant of Sports Marketing Promotions, BU Athletic Department, puts it this way: "I used to stop by the copy center with a Zip disk on my way home from work. Sometimes I would have to go back the next day with another disk because a font or graphic was missing. Now I just review the Adobe PDF on-screen, proof it and send it. It is so easy!" Moving away from an application file based workflow to a direct-submit, print-ready Adobe PDF workflow saved Cavanaugh considerable time, money, and aggravation.

Additionally, production turnaround time is greatly reduced for jobs that come in from users of IKON ExpressPrint. The Printing Industries of America (PIA) estimates that 67% of all jobs fail due to file submission errors (missing fonts, graphics, etc). By utilizing an Adobe PDF workflow, IKON ExpressPrint virtually eliminates the time consuming "back-and-forth" with customers to solve these problems. Image X-Press production personnel support this claim. "We can save at least 50% of the time it usually takes to get a job to the copier," explained Findlay. "Sometimes IKON ExpressPrint can cut out an entire day in the production cycle, but one of the things I like best is that it cuts out a tremendous amount of frustration, for us and for our customers. Plus, Adobe PDF is a format everyone is used to."

Faster turnaround time, a decrease in operator intervention, reduction of paperwork, all these factors add up to reduced costs for Image X-Press. Adobe PDF files can be opened and printed from any computer platform using Adobe Acrobat software. Gone is the requirement to maintain multiple platforms, operating systems, and various versions of all the applications used by customers.

From the customer side, IKON ExpressPrint helps control costs by allowing users to dynamically calculate pricing as the job ticket is filled out and options are selected. If the budget is \$75 the user knows immediately, before sending the job, exactly how many copies to order and which options to choose.

From the University's perspective, IKON ExpressPrint has met all set goals by improving customer service and advancing technology, but most importantly, by reducing overall copy and print costs to the faculty, staff, and students.

