

Realizing Digital Profitability with Unified Workflow

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Abstract

The graphic communications industry, like most other “manufacturing” industries has increased pressure to drive cost down while simultaneously providing automation. Every step in the graphic communications value chain is under scrutiny and a candidate for refinement. Unification of workflow processes can provide tremendous value both in terms of operational efficiency and top-line revenue growth. This paper will explore the situational analysis of graphics communications firms across the value chain and a suggested approach for well-orchestrated workflows.

The graphic communications industry has a very wide range of disciplines; from the creative and conceptual designers and marketers to the technical application specialists utilizing prepress technology to the mechanical and operational aspect of print production, finishing and fulfillment – many diverse dimensions exist. Technology and innovation have provided opportunities for various segments of the workflow to be refined in a manner that the workflow segment may experience new efficiencies as a segment of the workflow, yet the integration with other connected workflows may be incongruent. Over many decades various workflows have evolved and with this variety of unique and disparate workflows comes an opportunity to look more holistically at the entire value chain and tie together the full graphic communication ecosystem (GCE).

To better understand the GCE, it is important to assess the terrain from two perspectives;

1. What is the architectural model at a high-level that can contain the GCE?
2. What is the workflow assessment process methodology used to evaluate the graphic communication environment?

Simply stated – to “unify” a workflow the current workflow needs to be analyzed – to analyze workflow with the hope of providing some automation a consistent framework needs to be defined in a manner that the sum of the full graphic communications value chain can be reconciled within this framework. The

framework also needs a consistent taxonomy such that the labels and terms are stated in a consistent manner. Diverse members of the GCE need to adequately be able to represent themselves in a manner that they can relate to. The GCE architecture also needs a consistent process methodology for representation of the various processes in the workflow such that the “spirit” of the workflow is documented and can easily be understood and interpreted by others.

Additionally, on-site audits of each specific segment in the workflow need to be conducted and recorded within an architecture model such that the flow of information, materials and human interaction can adequately be analyzed.

Developing and utilizing these two analytical tools (GCE architectural model and GCE assessment methodology) can provide a bounty of valuable information and insights into areas ripe for automation as well as confirmation and leverage of areas with competitive differentiation.

The session will explore a high-level architectural model and a process methodology for characterizing and assessing a graphic communications workflow. Additionally, highly profitable business opportunities with respect to fully integrating digital print and the www will also be discussed.

Biography

Chris Bondy joined Kodak in January 2002 and is currently the Chief Technical Architect, Professional Services. Chris has over 26 years experience in the Graphic Communications and Digital Printing industry. He worked for Xerox Corporation as VP, Marketing and VP/Chief Engineer, Production Solutions. Chris also founded GraphiComm in 1988 and was Principal consultant at Torrey Pines. Chris studied Graphic Communications at Ambassador College, Interdisciplinary Studies (Business/Computer Science) at New York Institute of Technology and Masters of Engineering at RIT (in progress). Chris designed and taught courses at UCLA and has written for several trade publications including two industry books, one on electrophotography and one on Desktop Publishing for which he won PC Magazine Editors Choice Award.