Grafisk Trykk realises time saving thanks to EFI Digital StoreFront

Based at a state-of-the-art premises just fifteen minutes from the centre of Bergen, Grafisk Trykk is one of Norway’s largest print service providers. Founded in 1971, the company now employs approximately 30 staff, and has an annual turnover of 35 million Kroner.

The leadership team at Grafisk Trykk has always been focussed on innovation, and cites this as a key element in its continued success. It has looked to new technology as a means of helping it stay ahead of the competition, and in 2005 it purchased EFI Fiery®-driven Canon and Xerox digital printers to complement its Heidelberg presses, in order to reap the benefits of the growth in demand for short run, fast turnaround work. With the digital element of its print power firmly established, Grafisk Trykk was keen to harness the Internet as a means of making life easier for existing customers, as well as attracting new customers – it looked to EFI Digital StoreFront (DSF) to do this.
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Knut Magerholm, project manager at Grafisk Trykk, explains: “Over the past 18 months we have seen that customers have become slightly less interested in price, and more focussed on speed of delivery. So, turnaround time has become more important that ever before, and we have looked at the most effective ways of reducing this. Streamlining the job submission process for customers, and the job processing time for ourselves, was the key.”

Grafisk Trykk explored other web-to-print products on the market, but none matched up to the capability and cost-effectiveness of EFI’s solution. The award-winning Digital StoreFront is a web-to-print solution designed to ease print job specification and the handling for the customer, while automating workflow at the printer. It offers an end-to-end e-commerce workflow, and features inherent connectivity with other EFI solutions such as Fiery servers.

Digital StoreFront is completely customisable, so when customers log on to “Grafisk Trykk Online”, the homepage is branded with the company’s logo and ‘look and feel’. Customers that set up an account with Grafisk Trykk Online are asked to set their own password and security questions, enter their names and contact details, and agree to terms and conditions.

The customer can now choose between the two main elements of Digital StoreFront, the Online Catalogue or Print Services. Print Services contains all the different types of print job each individual customer might want. They can choose between their online files under My Files, upload them as they choose the different types of print, or use the Print Messenger. The Print Messenger is a virtual printer driver that allows them to upload files from their system just by clicking print from any application. The customer is then ready to use Grafisk Trykk Online through this printer driver, just like they would send a job to a Fiery driven multi function printer down the hall.

Print Messenger is based on PDF, so it automatically converts the files into print-ready PDF documents, which are also available to the customer for internal use. When a customer submits a job, an email is sent to Grafisk Trykk, appearing on a dedicated monitor. The operator simply chooses ‘output’ from the operator view, and the job is automatically transferred to a Hot Folder for imposition. Linking seamlessly with Fiery technology, the final PDF then appears on the Fiery RIP of whichever printer has been selected to produce the job. This means that there is only a matter of minutes between the job coming in to Grafisk Trykk, and the start of production.

Mr Magerholm comments: “Thanks to Digital StoreFront, we have been able to achieve a 50% reduction in the administration time associated with job production. If I had to manually process all the jobs that come in via Digital StoreFront, it would greatly impact our ability to meet the fast turnaround times that many of our customers now demand. The introduction of online job submission cuts out extensive customer liaison and various time-consuming scenarios, such as the need to confirm job details with the customer, and often not being able to reach them immediately, which is disruptive and always adds pressure to already tight deadlines. Now, with the receipt of print-ready documents and an automated workflow, all I have to do is make sure the printers are stocked with paper.”

Mr Magerholm cites one major customer in order to illustrate how Digital StoreFront has revolutionised the work it can now undertake. The largest real estate firm in the west of Norway, Eiendomsmegler Vest, produces approximately 50 different 24-page property brochures each week, each with a run of 50–70 copies. The customer’s ‘deadline’ to specify the job is 1pm each Monday, and Grafisk Trykk must have the jobs printed and delivered on Tuesday by 2pm. With a 24-hour turnaround period, the pressure is on for Grafisk Trykk to get the job into production as soon as possible.

Mr Magerholm comments: “Without Digital StoreFront, we would need to spend precious time on phone calls and email to verify the details of each job, and would therefore not be able to meet the deadline. Because we know that with Digital StoreFront, the file we receive from the customer is 100% print ready, no time is lost. Turnover on this customer alone, so far in 2007, is 2 million Norwegian Kroners, purely from work submitted via Digital StoreFront. Most importantly, the customer is so happy with the online ordering process that our remit is expanding to undertake all its other printing needs.”

Within Digital StoreFront, the Print Services area holds the standard, typical jobs required by each customer. When a customer opens an account, Grafisk Trykk works with them to set up these standard print job templates, such as 16 or 24 page brochures, leaflets, etc. The job options are agreed in advance, for example, choice of stock, quantity batches. This makes it quick and easy for customers to order jobs, with the confidence that they are using pre-agreed, authorised options.

The Online Catalogue area acts as an inventory for customers, designed for products whose content does not change, for example, letterhead, writing pads, mugs. When stock is running low, a customer can simply log-on and re-order the required item. Grafisk Trykk has gained several new customers in 2007 who purchase products from the Online Catalogue, which Mr Magerholm says is directly attributable to the fact that Grafisk Trykk now has an online presence.

He explains: “Norway is the country of small companies, and these types of businesses need to be totally focused on their core business during working hours. We attribute the success of our Online Catalogue business to the fact that businesses can order their stock out of hours, thanks to the 24 hour nature of the Internet. They can set delivery times that suit them, often during evenings or the weekend.”

Mr Magerholm expects to have no problems in converting existing customers to online job submission, and is in no doubt that Digital StoreFront will prove to be a fundamental aspect of Grafisk Trykk’s future growth: “In our industry, the business that wins is the one that can deliver fast, cost-effective services. DSF has enabled us to become far more productive, and therefore more profitable. We are well ahead of the competition thanks to DSF, and judging by our experience so far, it will be the key to attracting new business in the future.”