

From Stress to Success: A Print Business' Transformation

*How an Atlanta-based commercial printer used
XMPie software to lead a prosperous turnaround*

The **THP Creative Group** has transformed its business by shifting strategy towards providing e-commerce Web-to-print customer portals and repositioning its brand to reinvigorate customer trust and partnership potential.



AT A GLANCE

XMPie Customer

The THP Creative Group - a growing commercial printer offering digital marketing services in the Atlanta area

The Challenge

How to turn around a faltering print business to being successful and profitable

The Solution

XMPie PersonalEffect StoreFlow Web-to-print software

Equipment

Xerox Color 800 Digital Press

The Results

- 12 new clients in 6 months
- Print volume increased by 25% percent
- Company becomes a global provider

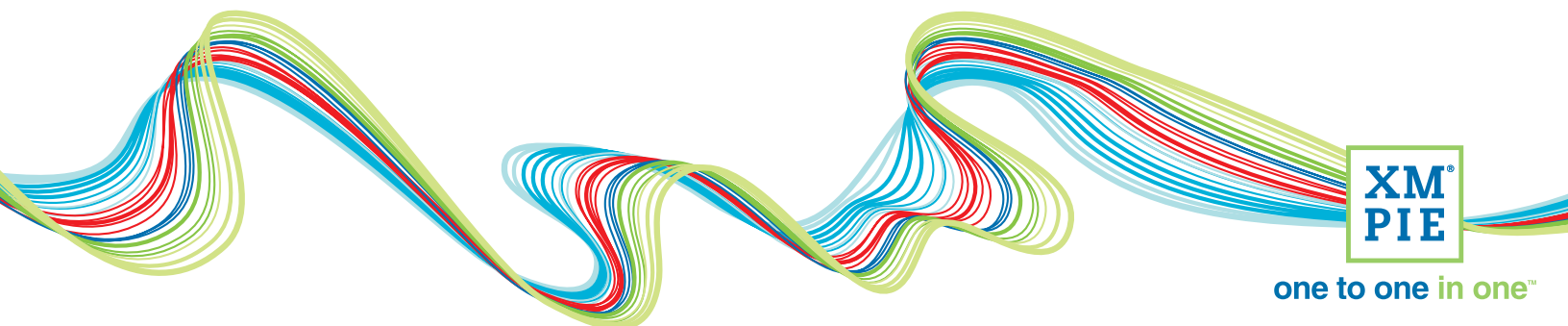
Background

Jefferson Riley, CEO of the THP Creative Group (www.thpcreative.com) had built up a diverse commercial print business in the greater Atlanta area providing conventional, digital and large format print and promotional products to corporate clients across a wide range of industries.

THP had been in operation for 36 years, yet by the end of 2012, the business was facing a severe crisis. Sales had been in decline from 2008 to 2011 and then went flat to the extent that Riley was forced to consider whether there was a future for his business at all.

"It seemed like no matter what I did, I couldn't get any growth going. I'll be honest - I got so discouraged and I was at my wits end. I gave my contact at Xerox a call and said that if we don't get some growth going soon- the business could be in danger of closing," explained Jefferson Riley.

Jennifer Lafayette, Digital Production Specialist at Xerox, provided business consulting for Riley on growth ideas and felt that XMPie would make an excellent fit and support his need to grow the business both for his customers as well as his business. She described how the XMPie software (in particular XMPie's StoreFlow Web-to-print solution built on its uStore technology) could help propel his business into the future like it has done for many other growing and profitable printers in the industry.



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Challenge

To its advantage, THP already had a strong business foundation with which to make the necessary adaptation and strategic change to their business model. They had a talented team in place, solid infrastructure, digital print equipment and technical know-how. They were just missing two vital elements: they had no Web-to-print software and no experience with selling Web-to-print applications to customers.



E-commerce and multichannel communications are transforming the printing industry. No print business today can afford not to embrace Web-to-print or ignore their customers' preferences for doing business online.

Solution

In the past Riley had considered investing in XMPie software but had never made the decision to commit to a change in direction and focus. With his business in crisis, he knew that it was time to consider a change in direction.

"It had become very clear to me that the question was no longer if I needed to get into Web-to-print and cross media, but when and how, and with our business challenged I knew I had to bite the bullet," says Riley.

Riley placed the order for PersonalEffect StoreFlow in the summer of 2013 and hired a new sales representative with 17 years' experience selling print to spread the word about THP's new advanced XMPie technology and capabilities. The sales rep immediately connected with 8 new customers who bought Web-to-print portals before the technology was even up and running.

"It was fantastic and enabled me to calculate our ROI straight away! I actually began to have fun again - I hadn't enjoyed being in business for quite some time in this economic environment - at last I could see a light at the end of the tunnel... and it wasn't a train!" said Riley.



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Results

Within 7 months THP had launched 18 Web-to-print sites each for different customers, including 12 large enterprises from multiple industries including an automotive chain, health care, travel agency, restaurant chain and more. One such new client, an international heavy construction equipment company, engaged THP to build a Web-to-print portal for processing a product catalogue of 150 customizable forms and brochures for their 191 dealers across the country.

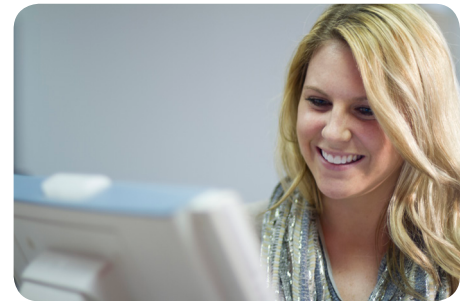
"Seems that customers are no longer excited about just new print capabilities – they want more and their eyes light up if you have something new to offer that could grow THEIR business. I experienced this firsthand when I began to explain to them about cross media and marketing portals – my prospective customers actually sat up, took notice and recognized how this could meet their business needs," says Riley.

By December 2013 volume had increased so rapidly that Riley invested in an additional digital press - a Xerox Color 800 - which printed 100,000 pieces in the first month after installation and volume doubled just a month later.

THP's recovery was so rapid that Riley was also able to invest in a new company, Tri-C Marketing, which he purchased at the beginning of 2014. *"Until I had learned enough about XMPie and seen the results, I wouldn't have been ready to acquire Tri-C. After I saw the volume of print orders coming in and sensed the massive volume that was going to come after, I was very excited about the acquisition."* says Riley.

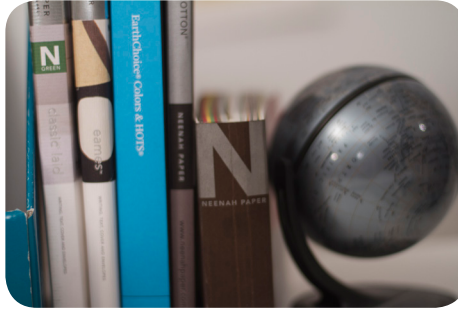
Tri-C Marketing's largest customer for the last 31 years has been a national restaurant chain, providing printing services both at corporate level and also to the 1,850 restaurant operators across the country. With this acquisition, THP plans to increase productivity by integrating Web-to-print across the entire enterprise.

As a positive side effect, Web-to-print has even enabled THP to receive other very high volume traditional print jobs from their new clients. *"It has opened the floodgates and drawn orders in other areas of our business"* says Riley.



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Critical Success Factors

1. Explore new technology and software

Providers must continually learn and explore the new technologies available. *"I couldn't get my head round the idea of XMPie at first- it took me three and a half years to finally comprehend the incredible impact it could have on my business,"* says Riley.

2. Invest in the right personnel

Along with a new staff member who was an expert in Web-to-print sales, the experience and competency of his existing graphics and digital staff was invaluable to enabling Riley to transition quickly and meet his new business needs.

3. Be a valued partner to your customers

Learn everything there is to know about a customer's business processes, goals and strategy in order to better provide Web-to-print solutions to help solve their business challenges.

Lessons Learned

1. The digital arena is key for a print business

Digital growth has exploded to the extent that Riley now starts all print shop tours in the "Digital Print" area and then he takes clients and visitors through the Offset Print area.

2. Success breeds success

By adopting a new technology and direction that quickly brought positive results, the company and staff was reinvigorated with new-found optimism.

3. Web-to-print requires a different strategy

Let your customers know that you are thinking beyond print with solutions to improve their marketing reach and operational efficiency.

To learn more about the full line of XMPie products, or to download a free trial of uDirect, visit www.xmpie.com. To speak to a sales representative call (212) 479-5166 or send email to: marketing@xmpie.com