

Cats Solutions always in business

Cats Solutions' managing director Greg Smith does not consider himself a printer, but a service provider. "In 1992, my family set up Copy Cats Copy in Swindon. The first week we reached a turnover of

63 pounds and 72 pence. Now the offset presses have all disappeared. We are completely digital." In January 2003 the company moved to a new, ultramodern building with a surface area of 20,000 sq. feet. Copy Cats Copy was renamed Cats Solutions and operates round the clock, seven days a week. Cats Solutions employs a staff of 75 people. It runs eight DocuTechs and two DocuColors 2060. During one busy month our DocuTechs processed twenty million clicks.

Praise for Premier Partners, but room for improvement

Greg Smith gladly joined the Xerox Premier Partner Programme. But his critical mind discerns room for improvement. "I sent an e-mail to a number of foreign partners to ask for support in processing a bulky printing order, but received virtually no response. A disappointing

experience. I would also like to see Xerox increase its marketing efforts with regard to our clients, as many companies still have virtually no idea about the possibilities of printing-on-demand and how the digital techniques currently on offer may benefit them."



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"Everyone in our organisation is very much aware that our clients are the ones paying their salaries, which entitles them to the best possible service at a highly competitive price."



THE DOCUMENT COMPANY
XEROX

"We solve our clients' problems"

Cats Solutions booms as print facility manager

"Don't dwell on the difficulties in the production process, but aim to solve clients' problems." In eleven years this family owned business has organically evolved into a multi million pound corporate organisation. Greg Smith, managing director at Cats Solutions has succeeded in setting up from scratch a fantastic service provider print company. "What we do is just as important to our clients as supplying electricity."



Greg Smith hates to hear people say something cannot be done. He calls himself 'a service provider', is passionate about his work and, as a former semi-professional football player, is not just in it for the game,

but to win. Smith: "A year and a half ago we had some important choices to make. Which clients did we wish to serve? What were their problems and how could we solve them as efficiently as possible using digital technology?" The offset presses went out the door and the company changed its image and name. Focus shifted completely to service provided print work for corporate organisations and Cats Solutions moved to a newly-built premises in Swindon city centre.

Acting on promises

Smith: "We promise our clients that every order placed today will be delivered tomorrow. Editions may reach five hundred thousand prints in black and white and one hundred thousand in colour; we guarantee next day delivery. Our organisation is geared to clients coming in on a Friday afternoon at five thirty, who need their prints the next day. That is what we promise and that is what we do. Our equipment is never taken up for more than 75% capacity. Should we exceed that percentage, we put in extra machines." Smith offers his clients tailor-made printing solutions. "We take all the

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hassle off a client's hands. Let me give an example. One of our clients produces some seventy million prints a year. Until recently, these were printed in offset. The real problem was not so much the printing, but the timely and correct delivery of all the constituent sub-orders to 160,000 different destinations. We put this before our think tank and they came up with a solution that entailed taking responsibility for the entire production, from the start up to delivery by courier. If a destination is accidentally missed, one of our personnel immediately checks our track-and-trace system to locate its position. Should this fail, we immediately reprint the order and make sure it is delivered promptly. A product isn't finished until it has reached the client.”

Cats Solutions lives off the work volume it generates by offering special services to corporate organisations. “Colleagues sometimes complain about all the different types of software they have to work with. Well, I have some bad news for them: It will only get worse. At Cats Solutions we don't care which format or operating system a client uses. We simply get on with the job. If a client so desires, we can even install our ‘digital

processing satellite’ free of charge. This provides them with a virtual printer which sends the data to us directly. We invest large amounts of money in our IT section. Currently we have ten people working there, but I suspect this number will increase substantially in the next couple of years.”

Greg Smith discerns a fear of change. “Many people are afraid of changes, even if in the long run they are bound to be to their advantage. Our sales section and I myself spend much time ‘educating’ our clients. We're not just talking offset or toner printing, but the entire document process, starting with the secretary placing the order through to delivery to our client's clients. I always ask my clients if they would care to let me deliver their print work directly to their clients. Why go through all the hassle of storing boxes of paper and finding a courier, when we can deliver better, faster and cheaper? A total print on demand managed solution utilising digital technology. Smith promises prospective clients up to 40% savings over in-house print rooms, and, that by using a unique DPS system, quality and service level will be increased while expenditure decreases.”
 “Which they refuse to believe, until

we show them that it can in fact be done.”

Passion and determination

Cats Solutions is a flat organisation, with short lines. “In no way do I wish to resemble a classic non-flexible printing company, with its



strict hierarchy and bureaucratic traditional way of thinking. We are fully flexible. We never give no for an answer,” Smith says. “We are passionate about our work, and determined. We have a fantastic team of people who complement each other very well. Everyone in



our organisation is very much aware that our clients are the ones paying their salaries, which entitles them to the best possible service at a highly competitive price. We are never arrogant, never greedy and we treat our clients with respect.”

Greg Smith sees an enormous potential for colour printing for both existing and prospective clients. “Although the price of colour prints has gone down rapidly in recent years, its current level is still not easily acceptable to my clients. Budgeting for Colour remains a difficult matter. Our own research shows that ink jet prints made by office staff costs over a pound per copy, not including the cost of paper and investment in the printer. Of course people are aware of this, but they don't really know how to tackle the problem. This offers untold opportunities, once the reluctance to lodge all print work with an on-line provider decreases.”

Tender suite

Solving problems is Cats Solutions' motto, even when this requires unorthodox methods. “Orders are increasingly granted by putting public contracts out to tenders; a real nightmare for businesses. The time-pressure involved in such projects is

immense. Therefore the final printed report often contains mistakes. Our offices contain a ‘tender suite’ for the use of our clients, where they can work in peace and quiet, with full access to all our technical aids. We provide catering and even an hotel when they need to extend their stay. Our expertise ultimately provides them with a perfect report, substantially heightening their chance of winning the contract.”

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