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REAL Marketing tracks and optimizes production with EFI IQ

REAL Marketing provides real estate agents and agencies with a wide variety of custom-designed direct marketing materials to bolster interest and drive sales. These must be high-quality in design and print to effectively drive house sales ranging from hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars. And these direct marketing materials need to be timely and accurate. Real estate sales can move fast, and catching the right people's attention at the right moment is critical for getting top-dollar results. REAL Marketing uses multiple listing service (MLS) market data to create newsletters and other direct marketing materials, ranging from thousands of regional mailings for some customers to highly targeted, limited mailings to specific communities for others.

The company has grown exponentially over the past year. In 2020, REAL Marketing spent $1.3 million mailing 7.5 million pieces through the USPS, with additional mailings into Canada. In March 2021 alone, REAL Marketing produced 630,000 12x18 100# silk cover sheets. The company prints this work on one Xerox® iGen® 5 and four Xerox Iridesse® digital color presses located in two geographically distanced locations. One printing location operates in San Diego, while the other is in Buffalo, N.Y.

David Collins, REAL Marketing's president, explains one of the core REAL Marketing philosophies. "Everything that we do for an agent must be measurable. Of the sixteen-hundred clients we have, we literally measure their success." REAL Marketing embeds this drive for measuring success in everything it does, including managing production.

Challenge:

"Everything that we do for an agent must be measurable."

DAVID COLLINS,
PRESIDENT

RM
REALMARKETING

California | New York | Canada

RM
REAL MARKETING

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REAL Marketing is a direct marketing company that primarily services the real estate segment. The company provides real estate agents and agencies with market reports, property brochures, postcards, websites, listing presentations, buyers and sellers guides, and all sorts of other marketing materials and direct mailings. REAL Marketing's objective is to implement all its clients' marketing needs and achieve actual, measurable results with the most effective products.

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Production analytics the traditional way

John Princic, national production manager for both locations, is responsible for tracking, measuring, and reporting production information. Princic explains that his task has not always been easy. "We used to take snapshots of every meter on every machine first thing in the morning on the first business day of every month. Then we'd drop these readings into an Excel spreadsheet to calculate click counts based upon the difference from last month's numbers." Princic then used these results to understand production volumes, ensure that equipment billings were correct, plan workloads, and report their production status to Collins.

Seeking a better solution

The challenges with this approach were that it was inaccurate, often out of date, and time-consuming to perform. Princic and Collins relied on these numbers to double-check media and click billings, but their accuracy was easy to dispute, and billing cycles often didn't align with Princic's readings. He needed ways to track shift and machine

Solution:

"There was just a software update on the Fiery servers, and the cloud connector did everything. Now I know my machines will always report up to the cloud."

JOHN PRINCIC,
NATIONAL PRODUCTION MANAGER

With EFI IQ, production manager John Princic is able to remotely pull production analysis figures whenever he needs them to monitor daily progress and productivity from both the company's San Diego and New York shops.

performance monthly, weekly, or even daily to manage staff, identify problems, and balance production volumes. However, his manual approach did not offer the granularity to do this. He needed a different method.

The EFI IQ approach

EFI™ Fiery® servers drive all of REAL Marketing's presses, so Princic began tracking the EFI IQ™ production analytics included within them, and his life changed. Now, he pulls his numbers out of EFI IQ whenever he needs them. He explains that "they are highly accurate down to whatever period I choose to analyze for every single machine and cannot be disputed."

Princic has EFI IQ opened on one of his screens every day to monitor progress daily and tracks how much each machine has produced. He can see both the San Diego and New York shops' productivity from his desktop in the San Diego office or even home with the EFI Go mobile app.

- The printer utilization chart, which shows printing, idle and disconnected times, helps him identify problematic machines. He uses this information to determine when he's approaching volume thresholds to shift jobs to other presses to keep jobs going out the door.

- He tracks overall volumes at a weekly level for planning how to handle major, upcoming jobs. He uses this information to know when to divert jobs between machines or even between shops.

- Individual press utilization helps him decide when to schedule preventative maintenance.

- Monitoring production involves also giving feedback or assistance to his team.. He can tell when operators walk away from machines

Result:

"EFI IQ has just been one of the best ways to keep track of everything. And, if I need to pull numbers, I know I can do it reliably and accurately the first time at a moment's notice out of this program. It's beautiful."

JOHN PRINCIC,
NATIONAL PRODUCTION

for extended times and give them a call to see what's going on. "My operators know I track what's going on, and they know I have EFI IQ open," Princic says. "Sometimes they'll come to me asking how much they got done. At other times I go running out there at the end of a day shouting how they killed it, and they're just ecstatic. They feed off it."

- And, of course, Princic can provide his boss with the reports he needs. "I do all-inclusive reports for each shop and then for each individual machine," he says. "David can call me up at any time, and I have the numbers right there. He is usually more interested in media volumes than clicks, and I can accurately get him whatever he needs in minutes."

An easy decision

EFI IQ Dashboard and EFI Insight for cutsheet presses come with all Fiery servers, so, since all of REAL Marketing's presses are Fiery Driven™ devices, he had all this functionality at his fingertips with no additional expense. All he had to do was to enable it. "Setup was easy," he says. "There was just a software update on the Fiery servers, and the cloud connector did everything. Now I know my machines will always report up to the cloud now. It wasn't hard at all."

Princic currently only uses EFI IQ dashboard, EFI Insight, and the EFI Go mobile app but could potentially utilize the other modules. For example, color management is critical to the types of high-quality work REAL Marketing produces. Princic says, "I've been working with Fiery digital front ends for ten-plus years. One of the biggest things about them is the color controls to hit the G7 calibration standard." The EFI ColorGuard™ app, which standardizes the color verification process to minimize waste, reprints, and rejected jobs, could be a good fit for the company in the near feature.

REAL Marketing has other opportunities to expand is digital production management workflow with EFI IQ. The EFI Manage app within IQ, for example, is an ideal next step as the company grows for ensuring optimal performance across his geographically distributed operation. EFI Manage, remotely syncs settings, resources, and patches across printers of the same model and helps drive optimal performance with compliance targets and reports.

EFI fuels success.

We develop breakthrough technologies for the manufacturing of signage, packaging, textiles, building materials, and personalized documents, with a wide range of printers, inks, digital front ends, and a comprehensive business and production workflow suite that transforms and streamlines the entire production process, increasing your competitiveness and boosting productivity. Visit www.efi.com or call 650-357-3500 for more information.

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