CASE STUDY

Automation moves the Central Dauphin School District into the 21st century

The Central Dauphin School District (CDSD) has two high schools, four middle schools, and 13 elementary schools – and one print shop to serve them all.

Supervisor of Digital Media Design, District Website, and Print Shop Irene O'Neill explains that each school building has a multi-function printer for short-run printing, scanning, and faxes. But The Digital Print Shop, CDSD's central digital print facility, does almost all the rest of the district printing.

The Digital Print Shop prints 1.8 million impressions a month, on average, using a Kyocera TASKalfa 7054ci color printer, driven by a Fiery® Printing System 17 DFE, with a booklet maker; plus five Konica Minolta AccurioPress 6120 black-and-white printers — all driven by Fiery MIC-4160 DFEs — that also have in-line booklet finishers.

Even more impressive than the monthly volumes they run is the fact that The Digital Print Shop does all of that within a four-day turnaround time – including the occasional rush job – delivering what O'Neill describes as a "pretty nice-looking finished product."

The Digital Print Shop accomplishes this despite budget cuts that reduced operator headcount from three full-time and one part-time personnel to just two. Here's how.

CHALLENGE

Maintaining high-volume output, a quality product, and fast turnaround with a reduced staff.
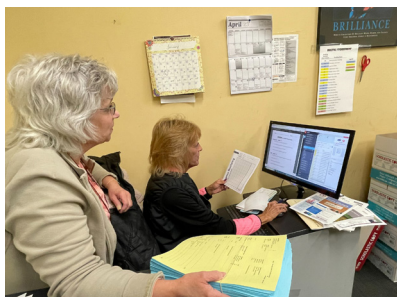
The Central Dauphin School District (CDSD) has a print shop that serves all its 19 schools and a fully staffed administration building, printing over 1,000 jobs a week / 1.8 million impressions a month on average using automated processes.

Central Dauphin, a uniquely diverse school district, serves a dynamic, suburban community of 95,000 residents with a total student membership of approximately 12,000 students. It is located northeast of the city of Harrisburg in south central Pennsylvania. The school district is the 9th largest school district in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and is the largest of the 10 school districts located in Dauphin county. Central Dauphin School District strives to provide "quality to the core" educational opportunities to ensure that all students achieve success.

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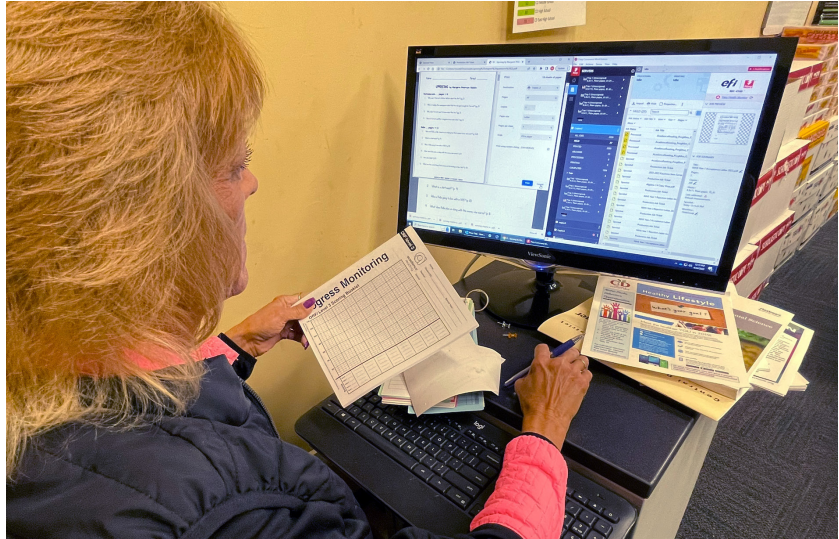
Teachers at the district can conveniently submit print jobs through the district's online ordering site. From there, the Digital Print Job system takes over and assigns one of their 30 predefined Fiery JobFlow™ workflows to each job. These workflows are carefully designed to map out the best production specs and settings for each print job. This not only streamlines the printing process but also ensures that each job is printed to the highest standards possible.

Everything is automated

Getting high volumes done, month after month, means the shop has had to automate everything from order submission to delivery notification. The loss of staff to budget cuts, says O'Neill, required maximizing what the shop could do with its Fiery workflow.

That has included maximizing a service O'Neill's clients, who are mostly teachers, appreciate – a Fiery workflow that seamlessly integrates with eProductivity Software MarketDirect StoreFront web-to-print ordering site.

O'Neill claims, "Automating everything has moved The Digital Print Shop into the 21st century."

Teachers use the District's online ordering site to submit jobs. "We have static documents we store there for staff to order," O'Neill says. "Some are locked

SOLUTION

"I don't know how we'd work without Fiery JobFlow™ workflows."

IRENE O'NEILL, SUPERVISOR

down with all the formatting set. That makes ordering easier because whoever is ordering doesn't have to select the required specifications to correctly obtain the final product."

While the MarketDirect StoreFront web-to-print software has made submitting print jobs easier, the integrated Fiery workflow in place at CDSD is where the rubber hits the road.

Operators filter incoming jobs and assign them for production. They can scan a job ticket to see everything needed to produce and then, with a flash of time-saving automation, select one of 30 Fiery JobFlow workflows that map out the best production specs and settings. O'Neill and her team at CDSD have configured Fiery presets with media, imposition templates, and finishing based on the product configurations of their web-to-print system. "That makes it really efficient," O'Neill says. "It's one of the reasons we've been able to continue to operate with only two operators."

To maximize both efficiency and productivity, CDSD has customized their Fiery JobFlow workflows to fit the District's needs. "We start a workflow when we see a common type of job that comes in," O'Neill says. "We make it with selections that we'd normally have to do manually. It helps our efficiency to just assign them. I don't know how we'd work without JobFlow workflows."

She adds that they were able to configure their own workflows with tools on the Fiery website and help from support staff. They began with simple workflows and then progressed to create more complex workflows, based on the most common ticket selections they received. "We make a JobFlow workflow with window selections. We do them for booklet imposition and common types of finishing. We have different workflows for card stock because it needs a different weight selection, or 3-hole, or booklets. We don't have to go into the print dialogue box and make 50 selections and make sure we didn't omit one."

A job ticket to success

They assign a workflow to every job, from the simplest to the most complex — streamlining the process. Operators select the Fiery JobFlow workflow based on the job-ticket specifications. O'Neill says, "We have 30 plus workflows and they are a major contributor to overall efficiency."

RESULT

"Automating everything has moved The Digital Print Shop into the 21st century."
IRENE O'NEILL, SUPERVISOR

The Fiery workflow, according to O'Neill continues to make the CDSD print operation more productive. "We can do so much more. We have jobs in the archive we can just pull out and print as needed. We don't even have to RIP the file again. We just print."

O'Neill says, "The storefront keeps a history of what teachers have ordered in the past. They can go back into their order history and re-order it. They don't have to re-invent the wheel every year. The curriculum administrators can use it to push out some of the materials they want teachers to use. They can send them links to the most current files too."

Efficiency and productivity

Automation saves the district time and money. O'Neill explains, "There's none of the manual work. I can go into the order detail and see the time and date the order was placed, plus when they need it. It's amazing for tracking purposes. It would be difficult to track all the work we do if everything was submitted by email. But that's what this [MarketDirect] storefront was designed to do. It's a very robust system."

And efficiency goes throughout the system. "Communications are more efficient too. When a teacher places a job, the principal gets a notification. The teacher also gets an automatically generated email when the job ships to the building, telling them when they can expect it."

With Fiery JobFlow and all the automation in use at The Digital Print Shop, "we can produce a lot in house, and it's financially effective to do it here," O'Neill says. "We don't use outside printers for much at all."

"Our ROI is good because building admins can review orders and we produce a nice product efficiently," she says. The strong integration between CDSD's web-to-print system and its Fiery workflow with JobFlow makes all the difference. "We can build templates within the storefront, and then design workflows that go with them."

See the difference.

Fiery, LLC is a leading provider of digital front ends and workflow solutions for industrial and graphic arts print industries. Our innovative software and cloud-based technologies deliver stunning color and exceptional print quality on a broad range of production printing devices. With over 30 years of excellent support and service, Fiery has built an unmatched community of customers and partners.