

Cal State Fullerton goes high tech with EFI to meet higher-ed print and copy needs

Terry Jarmon, IT director in the Cal State Fullerton Digital Print Services Department, had a successful and high-performing in-plant print operation, but did not have the type of data that would allow him to show senior college administrators that the department was indeed a better production option compared to outsourcing work to local commercial print shops. The department was on the verge of moving to a new facility, and Terry wanted data that could help him make the case that it was worth the college's continued investment.

Even more than that, Terry wanted to show how the department had growth and improvement potential using newer workflow and print management technologies. The campus already had faculty members who would print more course packs for their classes if the Digital Print Services Department had a faster workflow. Oftentimes, that is a bonus for students as it alleviates some of expense students bear purchasing textbooks.

On top of that, Terry realised that students represented an untapped market: Whenever they needed to print flyers, posters, booklets or anything that went beyond the capabilities of a personal or computer lab printer, they went to off-campus copy shops simply because there were no tools to submit their jobs to the Digital Print Services Department.

"We had EFI™ Digital StoreFront® for faculty and staff to submit work," says Terry. "But we knew students were sending work off campus because we did not have any easy ways for us to handle their jobs."

New space, new PrintSmith Vision workflow

Realising the growth opportunities that were possible, Cal State Fullerton established an advanced EFI workflow when it moved the Digital Print Services Division into a new space in 2013. The in-plant print operation already had an EFI Fiery® digital front end for colour printing work, along with EFI Digital StoreFront, but Terry's team



Challenge:

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TERRY JARMON, IT DIRECTOR
CAL STATE FULLERTON DIGITAL PRINT SERVICES



California State University, Fullerton, (CSUF) is a major regional university in a vital, flourishing area that includes Orange County, metropolitan Los Angeles and the expanding Inland Empire. The beautiful, 236-acre campus is in north Orange County, about 25 miles from downtown Los Angeles. CSUF has more than 39,000 students and approximately 1,800 full- and part-time faculty members. The university, one of 23 campuses in the California State University system, offers 107 degree programs in eight colleges. Since opening in 1959, CSUF has had more than 215,000 graduates; many are leaders in business, government, education, and the arts.

CSUF's Digital Print Services Department provides specialised printing and binding services, producing a wide range of products including books and manuals, business cards, flyers, posters and other documents. Located in the university's Pollock Library building, the department is part of CSUF's Division of Information Technology, an organisation committed to aligning its robust service offering with the goals of each division and department on campus and, more importantly, to reducing the cost of higher education for students.

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upgraded its internal management capabilities as well as its external service offerings by adding EFI PrintSmith™ Vision MIS software and a pair of walk-up multifunction printers (MFPs) connected to EFI M500 Self-Serve Copy and Print stations and EFI's cloud-based Self-Serve AdminCentral software.

The MIS installation provided immediate benefits in planning, scheduling and especially in estimating. "Writing out job instructions by hand consumed a huge amount of time," says Terry. "Estimating with PrintSmith Vision was a blessing for us."

And while the MIS improves many management tasks for Terry, the combination of PrintSmith Vision and Digital StoreFront also streamlines processes. Instead of staff having to create hard-copy job tickets for jobs, more work comes in electronically through Digital StoreFront and is loaded into PrintSmith Vision.

"We have all of our campus customers loaded in PrintSmith Vision," Terry notes, "so we can send an estimate right back to a person submitting a job through PrintSmith instead of hand-writing it and keying in an email message with the quote."

"And the beauty of this MIS for us as an in-plant print organisation is that we don't have to worry if there is accounting information in the job," Terry adds. "We just look up the person's email address and his or her department information is already there" so Terry and his team can easily and accurately identify which one of the many departmental cost locations at Cal State Fullerton will be billed for the work.

Streamlined production and higher volumes

"Faculty and staff can use purchase orders or state accounts to pay for their work, and it is all captured in Digital StoreFront very nicely," says Terry. The Web-to-print program performs well on the wide range of print products the in-plant produces, including perfect- and coil-bound documents, and smaller jobs like bookmarks and postcards.

Repeat jobs are also a breeze for campus departments to order. For example, "Our student union produces 1,000 postcards with the same image a few times per week to advertise events happening on campus," Terry says. "The job flows right into our system as an eight-up job on 12 x 18 stock."

The Digital Print Services Department also has started producing more work for students, thanks to its integrated eCommerce and MIS workflow and the university's EFI Self-Serve M500 stations.

"With Digital StoreFront, anyone with an Internet connection can send us jobs, but the work we get from students doesn't end up being the same type of work we do for faculty and staff," notes Terry.

Solution:

"Before installing EFI M500 stations and Self-Serve AdminCentral, the only time I knew an MFP was down was when someone complained."

TERRY JARMON, IT DIRECTOR
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With its new EFI workflow in place, student-generated work went from less than 1% to 20% of the Digital Print Service Department's print volume.

Students typically send very small orders, such as single 11 x 17-inch print or a short run of full-colour flyers.

The integrated EFI workflow has improved the department's already fast turnaround times, giving Cal State Fullerton the ability to produce more work, especially student printing. "In the past, student work was going to a 24-hour print and copy shop nearby," says Terry. "Now, those types of jobs come to us 24/7. The jobs are completed within a day – the same turnaround time we have for most of the work we print for faculty and staff. We can do that because our EFI workflow has really accelerated our capabilities in terms of the number of jobs we produce."

As a result of the Digital StoreFront installation and opening Portal access to students, the amount of student work printed went from <1% to 20% of the total number of jobs the Digital Print Services Department produces on an annual basis. And the department's monthly page volumes are up 10% overall compared to before the PrintSmith Vision installation and its integration with Digital StoreFront.

Jarmon's staff created a token identification system that authenticates students using the university's Web-to-print storefront. Currently, students can submit jobs and pay with a personal credit card, or pay using a campus payment card when they pick up their job. New and upcoming versions of Digital StoreFront that Cal State Fullerton will upgrade to as part of its maintenance service agreement promise to further improve the process, with a single sign-on feature that makes it easy to add new users to the system, and expanded compatibility with company credit cards – a feature that can give students the ability to pay with their campus cards through the college's online storefront.

When the Digital Print Services Department moved into its new facility on the second floor of the Pollock Library, it also gained another key technology to help students: walk-up MFPs installed in the library and connected to EFI M500 Self-Serve Copy and Print Stations.

The EFI M500 station integrates with campus card and billing systems, providing the easiest way for users to access, pay and print in a completely self-serve environment. Cal State Fullerton also installed EFI Self-Serve AdminCentral software – a cloud-based web application that enables central control of M500 stations located in multiple sites, and communicates with card authorisation services.

Result:

"With PrintSmith Vision, we can track which jobs are profitable and which ones are not."

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PRINT SERVICES

"Before the M500, we had a system for card swipes on walk-up copiers, but it was very painful to use. Half the time it logged students in, and half of the time it wouldn't," says Terry. "The M500 system, on the other hand, works great!"

Likewise, EFI Self-Serve AdminCentral software gives him more information and control than he's ever had before. "With Self-Serve AdminCentral, I can watch the health of the MFPs and monitor the jobs they are running," he says, "things I couldn't expect to get before in managing a copier operation."

Overall, the self-serve systems have been a big plus in ensuring that students can produce copies and print from thumb drives, mobile devices or online cloud accounts whenever they want, with few complications. And, they are leading Cal State Fullerton to adding even more self-serve copying capacity. "We have two walk-up MFPs with M500 systems," says Terry. "Students rarely need assistance using them, so we are planning on adding two more."

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