



MIS PROVIDES A PROFITABLE RETURN

Adapt, change and benefit is the watchword at Lonsdale Print Solutions who proclaim that from just three small words comes one big result! And what a magnificent result it has turned out to be for this Northants printing company with a 100 year pedigree.

Known locally as Perkins and Sons, this 100 year old local jobbing stationery printer was acquired by the Lonsdale Universal Group in the 1960's. From here the company rapidly began to expand into other markets, most notably the business forms sector before it was once again taken over in the early 1980's by its then management team via an MBO.

At this time the company was a specialist business forms and operational print supplier but had recognised that its customers were looking for a supplier that could handle more than just putting ink on paper. They were asking the company to handle direct mail in small to medium volumes, and by the mid 1990's the company was printing, storing and managing the flow of printed documents to some 200 locations across the UK.

Recognising that customers wanted their print produced with shorter lead times, the company once again moved with the times and expanded into high volume mono and high quality colour digital printing. Through the adoption of an Xralle web to print solution, customers can personalise their own variable data printing 24 hours a day via the company's online web portal. The Xralle system, as part of its greater service offering, is helping Lonsdale Print Solutions to attract further new business and win larger contracts in the retail, leisure, education, insurance, and general manufacturing sectors simply because the range of products offered is more attractive to a broader spectrum of customers.

Today, Lonsdale Print Solutions stands as shining example of a company that has grown its business on the strength of the fact that it isn't afraid to ask questions of both itself and, more importantly of its customers. Jonathan Marriott, Commercial Services Manager at Lonsdale takes up the story: "As a business we've always managed to keep ahead of the times and buck the trends. We tend to concentrate more on giving our customers



exactly what they want. We've never been shy of going the extra mile and asking our customers what it is that they want from us, or for what purpose they require a particular job. Asking simple and quite straightforward question such as this might sound odd to some, but we think that not enough printers bother to ask all that many questions of their customers, particularly about the print that they are being asked to produce. We listen to our customers and if we think that what they are trying to achieve is something that we can handle, we will work in conjunction with them to find a solution to their problems. And it works. We win an awful lot of added value new business just from asking the right questions."

Today, added value services commands some 50% of the company's attention and the business is consistently looking to add value to its customers either by kitting or fulfilling product into boxes or inserting letters into envelopes. Its 30,000 sq ft print management centre and printing facility is spread over two locations which makes Lonsdale Print Solutions one of the largest print management centres in the midlands.

CASE STUDY



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"Having the print management centre in a separate location means that we can keep the two operations separate, but it is co joined and linked by our Shuttleworth Management System," says Mr. Marriott.

The company invested in a full Shuttleworth MIS in early 2006 and after a thorough implementation and testing, went live with the system in October of that year with all estimating, scheduling, purchasing, costing and accounting put through The Shuttleworth System.

"Our previous MIS was a good system and was easy to use but it was limited in its applications. We had gone to market and looked at what all of the other suppliers could offer, but we felt that The Shuttleworth System was very open about third party software connecting to its MIS and it was very transparent. Shuttleworth's whole attitude of working with us as a customer to help us, rather than just trying to sell us products really appealed to us. Shuttleworth is not the type of company that tries to sell you a quick fix. They like to work hand in hand with their customers and we really appreciated that. It took us a full six months to do the implementation before we went live, but we wanted to ensure that everything was perfect before we switched over to the new Shuttleworth System," says Mr. Marriott.

One of the major benefits of the MIS at Lonsdale Print Solutions is that it gives the management the ability to analyse the sales performance of its many and varied customers, allowing management to identify which of its customers are generating the most profit. By the same token the MIS can also analyse the customers to see who is not providing the business with a profitable return.

"We have actually ceased trading with one or two accounts since we have been analysing customer performance data. We knew how much time some of our accounts were taking to service but until we had The Shuttleworth MIS we never really knew just how unprofitable one or two of them could be. It took us about six months for us to reach the stage where our reporting was beginning to have this level of meaning but now we can monitor year on year to see where

we have or have not improved as a business. We can also see where the added value business is coming from, and this type of costing information is invaluable," he says.

The Shuttleworth MIS system has thus far enabled Lonsdale Print Solutions to investigate where it is headed as a business and has helped the business to identify any inefficiencies and bottlenecks in production. Moving forwards, the company is now beginning to use its MIS to analyse the accuracy of its deliveries, and to further develop the reporting of its shop floor data collection module and make better use of the CRM to bring its customer accounts team closer to its customer base.

"We can now look at the most cost effective method of delivering a finished job to the customer in the most efficient method. These are all the things that we weren't doing before because we were looking at everything from a production perspective rather than from the accountants point of view. There's a lot more that we can get out of The Shuttleworth System. Our next phase is to start developing the CRM and shop floor data collection. The MIS is a core tool for our businesses and we can clearly see how the CRM is going to enable us to develop more opportunities to get in front of people. Since we went live with our Shuttleworth System we have been able to do more business management with it than ever before," concludes Jonathan Marriott.

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