

Sells Printing Company

Setting new standards for efficiency and quality

Successful printer uses Adobe® Creative Suite 2 software and participation in Adobe Solutions Network to reduce costs and improve client services



Taking brilliant designs from the computer screen to the printed page is challenging for many creative professionals. Fortunately, printing service leaders like Sells Printing are skilled at identifying and preventing potential printing problems long before they happen. “We work with terrific designers who may not be familiar with the intricacies of commercial printing,” says James Wamser, senior training specialist at Sells Printing. “Our goal is to educate and assist them in moving great ideas from their computers to printed pages as quickly and efficiently as possible.”

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*James Wamser,
senior training specialist,
Sells Printing*

Wamser and other Sells Printing employees clearly know what they are doing. The successful print services provider has expanded its offerings and seen its business continue to grow. Today, Sells Printing serves a range of regional and national customers with integrated communications production systems, including full electronic prepress; binding, mailing, and distribution services; and CD-ROM services. The company is also a leader in the application of stochastic screening for heat-set web printing.

Integral to the company’s success is the use of best-in-class design, layout, and printing technologies. Sells Printing combines powerful print and print workflow solutions from Heidelberg, Hewlett-Packard, and Kodak with award-winning Adobe Creative Suite 2 applications to improve file preflight and printing. “Adobe is unique in that the company thoroughly understands the needs of creative professionals and printers,” says Wamser. “Through industry-standard solutions and programs like the Adobe Solutions Network, Adobe enables us to respond easily to our clients’ changing needs.”

The Adobe Solutions Network (ASN) offers extensive training for both designer and printers so that both are knowledgeable and productive in transferring files that are production ready.

A standard in the print industry

Approximately 40% of projects are received as Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) files or native Adobe InDesign® CS files, and Wamser sees this percentage increasing over time. “Our clients determine the design and layout solutions that they want to use,” he says. “Given the many preflight and printing features built into Adobe Creative Suite 2 applications, it is only natural that more clients are opting to use these solutions.”

Sells Printing customers submit print jobs via the company’s FTP site. When clients submit QuarkXPress™ files, preflight can take significantly longer compared to when clients submit materials in Adobe PDF. This is because handling the QuarkXPress files often requires that the Sells staff spend time tracking down all the fonts and ensuring that all the design elements are associated with the file.

These designs from Trek Bicycles Corporation were submitted to Sells Printing as PDF/X-1a files. This helped eliminate common preflight errors such as missing fonts, overprint problems, and issues with color space.





Using built-in preflight capabilities in Adobe Acrobat 7.0 Professional software, Sells Printing staff can quickly preflight complex designs like these from Trek Bicycles. Acrobat makes it easy to check for hairlines, determine if fonts are embedded, and verify color mode and image resolution.

Avoiding common preflight errors

To help accelerate preflight and minimize errors, Wamser works with clients to educate them about the benefits of the PDF/X-1a format, which helps ensure that all required fonts and images are embedded properly in a file. “By submitting materials in PDF/X-1a, clients can avoid common errors on print jobs, such as missing fonts or images, overprint problems, and using the wrong color space,” he explains. “One of the great things about Adobe Creative Suite 2 applications is that they support direct output of materials to PDF/X-1a. This is a big plus for printing.”

Another advantage of using industry-standard Adobe PDF files is that the small file sizes download much faster and are easier to manage than larger native application files. For example, all elements of a design can be contained in a compact PDF file. In contrast, if a document is delivered as a QuarkXPress file, Sells staff has to organize every image associated with the file, link the document file and the image files, and then preflight them. “We save a significant amount of time when clients send print jobs in Adobe PDF,” says Barry Brown, prepress manager at Sells Printing.

Sells Printing has also streamlined its preflight and printing workflows by using built-in print production tools in Adobe Acrobat® 7.0 Professional software to verify color mode and image resolution, check for hairlines, and determine if fonts are embedded. Automating these simple, albeit vital, steps in the preflight process can eliminate days from print workflows because clients and print staff can preview materials instantly, instead of waiting for proofs to be output and delivered for review.

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James Wamser, senior training specialist, Sells Printing



Integration among the applications in Adobe Creative Suite 2 enables Sells Printing staff to quickly accommodate client changes to files. For example, Adobe Photoshop CS2 and Adobe Illustrator CS2 applications can be accessed from within Adobe InDesign CS2, making it fast and easy for Sells staff to rework images as needed.

An integrated approach

Some clients post files to the Sells Printing FTP server as InDesign CS files that contain images created in Adobe Photoshop® CS and Adobe Illustrator® CS. Because the Photoshop CS2 and Illustrator CS2 applications can be accessed from within InDesign CS2, Sells Printing staff can quickly revise submitted materials in response to client changes. “The ability to move easily across integrated Adobe applications can save us hours of work,” says Brown. Once preflighting is complete, staff can view color separations onscreen in InDesign and output materials to print-optimized Adobe PDF files.

Good for Sells Printing and for clients

Sells Printing’s commitment to using and promoting leading print workflow solutions has proven to be a winning business strategy that has reduced operating costs and improved the quality and on-time delivery of printed materials. With the continued training and support available through the Adobe Solutions Network, Wamser is further helping Sells Printing and its customers to achieve their goals. “Our relationship with Adobe benefits our customers and our bottom line,” he says. “Given the increased competition and greater customer demands in the print industry, Adobe is delivering important solutions that help us work smarter and more efficiently.”

Company

Sells Printing Company

New Berlin, Wisconsin
www.sells.com

Challenge

- Streamline preflight and printing processes in response to increased customer demands and reduced margins in the print industry
- Minimize errors on submitted print jobs
- Speed turnaround on client jobs

Solution

- Adopt proven preflight and print workflows built around Adobe Creative Suite 2, including Adobe Acrobat 7.0 Professional software
- Leverage expert support through Adobe Solutions Network to enhance client services

Benefits

- Accelerated preflight processes significantly when handling print jobs submitted in Adobe PDF
- Improved customer service and print quality due to ease of working in integrated Adobe solutions
- Reduced administrative time and costs for the company and its clients

Tool Kit

- Adobe Creative Suite 2 Premium. Components used include:
 - Adobe InDesign CS2
 - Adobe Illustrator CS2
 - Adobe Acrobat 7.0 Professional
 - Adobe PDF
 - Adobe Photoshop CS2
 - Adobe PostScript® 3™
- Apple Power Mac G5 computers running Mac OS X
- Creo Trendsetters from Kodak

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