



A new view of printing

Printing company uses the Adobe® Creative Suite 2 applications, including Adobe Acrobat® Professional, to accelerate preflight, shorten print turnaround, and improve quality of client jobs

For more than 55 years, McArdle Printing Company has stayed true to its mission to maintain “consistent quality, timely delivery, and satisfied customers.” The firm uses a winning combination of staff expertise and leading technologies to keep existing customers happy and attract new ones. An important element of McArdle’s success is continually finding ways to improve its processes and better serve its customers’ changing needs.

“ASN is a valuable resource for us. We benefit from having access to Adobe’s skilled staff and also by giving our customers direct access to a publishing technology leader.”

Jack Thorpe, prepress manager, McArdle Printing Company

Company

McArdle Printing Company

Upper Marlboro, Maryland
www.mcardleprinting.com

Challenge

- Improve the quality and reliability of print jobs submitted by clients
- Accelerate turnaround on print jobs
- Reduce preflight time and costs

Solution

- Participate in ASN for ongoing product updates, technology trend information, and training
- Establish preflight and print workflows around the Adobe Creative Suite 2, supporting fast, efficient document handling in Adobe PDF

Benefits

- Accelerated turnaround on client print jobs by days
- Enhanced client services with improved training through ASN
- Reduced errors on print jobs by increasing submissions of print-optimized Adobe PDF files
- Improved staff responsiveness to changing client demands and new market trends

Tool Kit

- The Adobe Creative Suite.
Components used include:
 - Adobe InDesign CS2
 - Adobe Photoshop® CS2
 - Adobe Illustrator® CS2
 - Adobe Acrobat Professional 7.0
- Adobe PDF Workflow
- Adobe PostScript® 3™
- Apple Power Mac G4 and G5 computers running Mac OS X
- Heidelberg Speedmaster printing presses
- Heidelberg heat-set web presses

“In printing, there are always new customer demands and new business opportunities,” says Jack Thorpe, prepress manager at McArdle Printing Company. “Our goal is to quickly fulfill customer requests today while laying the foundation for improved printing workflows tomorrow.” To help achieve these aims, McArdle Printing actively participates in the Adobe Solutions Network (ASN) and has integrated Adobe Portable Document (PDF) and the Adobe Creative Suite 2 applications into its everyday workflows.

ASN: a valuable resource

McArdle Printing serves large and small companies throughout the United States, producing marketing collateral, financial reports, and other business documents. Like other printers, the company often deals with preflighting poorly prepared client files. For instance, files with missing fonts and graphics are common, as well as materials lacking the proper color settings to print correctly. “We’re charged with producing top-notch results, even if the client materials we receive are less than ideal,” explains Thorpe. “Fortunately, ASN gives us the support we need to educate our clients to improve the quality of submitted materials.”

As an ASN member, McArdle Printing receives regular updates on the latest print trends and Adobe technologies of interest to service providers, and ASN experts are available to participate in training sessions for the company’s staff and clients. Typically, McArdle Printing holds several client training seminars annually covering issues in preflight, color management, file preparation, imposition, and other important topics. “ASN is a valuable resource for us,” says Thorpe. “We benefit from having access to Adobe’s skilled staff and also by giving our customers direct access to a publishing technology leader.”

PDF workflows on the rise

McArdle Printing sees significant advantages to integrating Adobe PDF more fully into printing workflows. Currently, approximately 30% of the client files the company receives are Adobe PDF files. With proper customer training and outreach, Thorpe anticipates the quality and quantity of print jobs submitted in Adobe PDF will continue to rise.

Submitting print jobs as optimized Adobe PDF files eliminates the hassles and uncertainties of dealing with native application files. And because jobs in Adobe PDF contain all elements—text, fonts, images, color settings, and other details—in a self-contained file, McArdle Printing staff does not have to deal with multiple components in different applications. “Client jobs submitted in Adobe PDF are more compact and easier to manage,” says Thorpe. “It’s also simple for us to make last-minute corrections to Adobe PDF files to optimize printing.”

“ASN and the Adobe Creative Suite 2 have been instrumental in enabling us to respond to new demands and opportunities. With Adobe as a resource, we can deliver top-quality services using the latest technologies.”

Jack Thorpe, prepress manager, McArdle Printing Company

More reliable files with the Adobe Creative Suite 2

From Thorpe’s perspective, enhancements to Adobe Acrobat Professional and Adobe PDF are only part of the preflight and printing improvements in the Adobe Creative Suite 2. For instance, the ability to view color separations and use transparency flattening tools in Adobe InDesign® CS2 supports more streamlined preflighting. In addition, the ability to export to PDF/X-1a directly from InDesign CS2 is excellent. “When working with files created in Adobe InDesign CS2, we can prevent costly errors thanks to preflight capabilities that flag duplicate inks, missing artwork, and missing fonts—including those in placed art,” says Thorpe.

Approximately half of the print jobs submitted by customers using Apple Macintosh systems arrive in InDesign CS. Using the software, McArdle Printing leverages built-in tools such as Separations Preview, Flattener Preview, and output to Adobe PDF to speed printing. “The Adobe Creative Suite 2 provides an integrated approach for moving concepts from initial design to printing,” says Thorpe. “Keyboard shortcuts learned in one Adobe Creative Suite application can be applied to other CS2 applications.” Also, it is easier to standardize production and output settings by distributing PDF presets and color setting files that work across all of the Adobe Creative Suite 2 tools.

Commitment to quality and efficiency

By promoting Adobe PDF workflows and incorporating the Adobe Creative Suite 2 into processes, McArdle Printing is reducing the costs to preflight and manage client files. The more automated, digital processes can also accelerate printing files by days, while supporting more reliable production of increasingly complex materials.

Even amid all the technological changes in the print industry and client expectations, McArdle Printing is staying focused on its core value: efficiently producing client print jobs with exceptional quality. “ASN and the Adobe Creative Suite 2 have been instrumental in enabling us to respond to new demands and opportunities,” says Thorpe. “With Adobe as a resource, we can deliver top-quality services using the latest technologies.”