
12

SECRETS FOR DIGITAL SUCCESS

Best practices to help quick print shops
use digital technology profitably

By John Giles





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Best practices to help quick print shops use digital technology profitably

Other publications by the author:

THE DTP PRICEBOOK:

A desktop publishing pricebook for quick printers on disk

DIGITAL DIRECTIONS:

A Digital Workflow Guide for Customer-created Files

THE DIGITAL ORIGINAL:

How to handle a customer's file without becoming a service bureau

DIGITAL DIALOG:

How to talk to quick printing customers about computer files

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All rights reserved. Inquiries should be addressed to John A. Giles III, The Giles Group, 110 Cannery Lane, Winfield, West Virginia 25213; Telephone: 304-552-5363; e-mail: john@johngiles.com. Web site address: <http://www.johngiles.com>.



Foreword

Personal computers have had the biggest impact on the printing industry in the last 20 years. Printers can create and produce work faster than ever before. Customers believe they can get faster service and better prices by becoming part of a commercial printer's workflow. An industry that was once a craft that took a customer's idea and completely controlled its creation into a printed piece has turned into a partnership where the customer not only supplies the concept but also becomes an important cog in the manufacturing process.

I have watched these changes over the years and have followed the struggles printers have had in adopting and implementing the personal computer technology. From the transition from typesetters to the Apple Macintosh to web-to-print technology, printers have attempted to introduce technology and techniques that would improve their productivity and profits.

The printing world has changed from an analog to a digital world. Computers and printers link into a digital network that changes the way printing is purchased and produced. Some printers have used technology successfully. Others still struggle with accepting customer-created files and making a profit. New digital technology continues to be introduced that is supposed to make print buying easier. The printer just needs to find the time and the money to make it work.

My first books focused on the basics of handling customer-created digital files. *The Digital Original* taught printers how to train the customer to create a Postscript file; the basic element needed to create a PDF file. It also offered a general outline for establishing procedures for accepting customer-created files. *Digital Dialog* was a primer on digital terms and concepts for new sales and customer service staff. It helped employees



understand the digital terms needed to discuss files with customers.

Digital Directions offered standards, procedures and systems for establishing and maintaining a workflow to accept customer-created digital files in the small commercial and quick printing shops. It built on what the industry has learned from the *Digital Original* and *Digital Dialog*. Its purpose was to offer solutions and “how-tos” that can be put into every day practice.

12 Secrets for Digital Success builds on my earlier books and revisits today’s print shop to look at the practices successful printers are using to make it easier for customers to buy more printing. It highlights 12 secrets printers must know about if they want to implement new digital technology profitably. The secrets range from proper planning and organization to deployment of special web-to-print services to the importance of the PDF format and job submission standards. A quick and small commercial printer can use these secrets to enjoy a competitive advantage that can make his company different from the printer down the street.

12 Secrets for Digital Success also includes basic procedures to easily handle customer-created files. The printer must manage how a customer prepares and submits a digital file because it will dictate what services the printer can offer. There have been changes since *Digital Directions* was last published and newer and better ways to handle customer files have emerged. Web-to-print technology has advanced. Digital technology is less expensive and easier to use than ever before. Following the secrets in *12 Secrets for Digital Success*, quick and small commercial printers will be able to apply digital technology profitably and avoid the pitfalls that cost time and money.

In this book you will find more than 12 secrets for digital success. Many of the best practices required for a quick or small commercial printer to be successful with digital technology can be applied to the entire organization. Good business practices are good business practices, no matter what the business.

Printing is at a crossroads. The printers who turn their backs on the new

digital techniques and procedures are destined to fade away. The successful printers will learn new ways to use the new technology to interface with customers. *12 Secrets for Digital Success* will help printers understand what digital technology is available and how the technology can make them money. Digital and web-to-print technology in the printing industry is ever-changing and evolving. The printers who can show their customers about how digital and Internet technology can go beyond “putting ink on paper” will enjoy a profitable and successful future.

John Giles
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The World is Going Digital

If you are a printer, no one has to tell you the printing industry is changing and it is changing quickly. Customers now want to create the majority of the documents they want printers to reproduce. Customers want to interface with printers over the Internet. Market boundaries have expanded as the Internet allows printers to go after customers worldwide. Automation is allowing some workflow functions to be completed faster and more efficiently than ever before. Printers don't just put ink on paper. They have to understand how print fits into a customer's total communication plan.

The printing industry is evolving and no one has been hit harder by the changes than the quick and small commercial printer. Making up the largest segment of the printing industry, quick and small commercial printers can be either the biggest benefactor of the changing industry or its biggest victims.

Printers must begin to use and understand the new technology available to the industry if they expect to continue in business. Old business models are disappearing and new ways to sell printing are evolving. Ease of ordering is paramount. A printer must be prepared to spend time, energy and money to integrate the new systems into his existing company. It may mean throwing out old methods and adopting new ones. It could mean buying new equipment and software. It might mean changing employees and even customers.

This book outlines 12 secrets a printer must take to successfully deal with the transition from being an analog printer to a digital printer. Just buying a special software application, having a website or simply accepting a customer's digital file doesn't really make you a digitally competent printer. You must be able to successfully combine all the services into one



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marketing advantage to make yourself different from the competition. The secrets are steps that can be applied to most existing printing companies. They already have the equipment and software to provide a broad spectrum of digital services. Many already have the tools. The problem is they are not being used in an organized fashion to benefit the company, its sales or its profits. This book will show you how to profit from what you have.

What are the 12 secrets to digital success?

Over the years, I have found there are 12 secrets that a printer must apply to his company if he wants to make digital technology a profitable part of his organization. The secrets can unlock digital potential and move the printer to the next level.

1. Define and segment the selling and production opportunities. It is no secret that digital services can impact a printing company, but there are so many digital services a printer can sell that sometimes the choices become overwhelming. Printers tend to put all digital technology into one basket. There are a number of different niches a printer can exploit. The secret to digital success is to find the digital niche that can make you money.
2. Get the company organized. Most printers are not organized to take advantage of the power of digital technology. The secret to success is in the organizing of the company's operations. Standards and procedures are needed to make digital production part of the company's culture. It requires a strong leader to serve as the choke point and ensure the digital technology is being used, and used properly.
3. Find the right employees. Sometimes the current employees are not the right ones to implement the new technology. The digital secret is that success is built upon the capabilities of the print company staff taking advantage of the benefits and features of the technology, and not just the technology itself. It takes people to make the technology work. It takes people to explain the new technology to

customers. Unless the right employees are in place, the power of digital technology will never be tapped.

4. Develop a standard workflow. The secret of digital success is in the details. The ultimate power of digital technology is that many of the tasks in production can be automated. The automation can reduce human error and shorten traditional production times. But before automation can occur, it requires that basic standards and procedures be in place and in use. Automation will fail if a company continues to treat each order as a custom job. Printers need to learn how a simple workflow can evolve into an automated workflow that can increase profit margins.
5. Develop the right pricing practices. No matter how well your internal workflows operate and how efficiently you use your digital technology, you can still lose money if you do not price properly. The biggest digital secret is that the majority of customers will pay a higher price for the benefits digital technology offers. While some of the new digital technology allows you to become the low-cost producer and sell commodity type of work at low prices with better margins, most quick and small commercial printers can use digital technology to add value to the print order that erases price objections. Having the right pricing strategies will help a printer promote the value of digital technology and its profitability.
6. Adopt the PDF digital file standard. The Portable Document Format (PDF) is the de facto standard for file transfer and the basis of almost all the digital and web-to-print services available. The secret is that PDF is the platform on which almost every new digital service is based. The PDF files impact on the different digital and web-to-print business models is far reaching and printers need to know how to take advantage of the PDF format.
7. Develop and maintain native application standards. Not all customers are the same. While much of the work that quick and small commercial printers produce comes from customer-created files, the PDF solution will not work for everyone. There are instances where



printers must accept native applications. Even PDF files can be rife with errors that cause delays if customers don't follow proven digital standards. The secret is that digital standards have developed for the printing industry and customers are learning they must meet those standards or face delivery delays and higher prices. Quick and small commercial printers must embrace the digital standards for native application files and promote the rules customers must follow if they expect to be part of a printer's digital workflow.

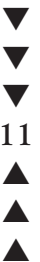
8. Buy the right equipment and software. Printers must have the right tools if they expect to take advantage of the new technology. There are certain software applications and hardware solutions available that printers must have to successfully handle digital situations. The wrong choice can add production times and cripple an automated workflow system.
9. Develop a robust website. The secret a successful printer has found is a website that is more than a Yellow Pages ad with your address and telephone number. Successful printers use their website as another communication tool that can keep them linked with their customers 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Printers have to know what is needed in a website, where to get it and how to use it. There is more to a website than just looks.
10. Use the Internet to make ordering easier. Successful digital printers have learned the secret of turning the Internet into an electronic CSR that allows printers to provide services 24 hours a day, seven days a week for customers around the world. Adding an online document library and customer-specific portals can dramatically increase the amount of printing a customer orders.
11. Add marketing/brand services. Printers have to break out of the commodity business where printing products are sold based on price rather than value. The new digital web-to-print services allow printers to go after work that has a higher value in the customer's mind. Customers will pay more for a printed piece that is helping



them sell something to someone. With special services such as personal URLs, short-run variable data printing, web-to-print brand protection and custom collateral support, a printer can deliver an extra perceived value that helps remove price as part of the buying decision. Going after marketing related work is a secret most successful digital printers have embraced.

12. Find and train the right customers. Just like having the wrong employees who are incapable of understanding the power of digital and web-to-print technology, you can also have the wrong customers. There is no need to invest time and money into the new digital technology if you are currently selling to customers who have no need for the services. The secret is to find the customer that appreciates the benefits digital and web-to-print technology offers. Once you have identified the customer, it will be your responsibility to make sure that customer has the training to use the technology.

If a printer will integrate the ideas in this book, they will unlock the secret that successful printers aren't talking about: "You can make money with digital technology." The printing companies that are growing and expanding their business use these 12 secrets every day. Using digital and web-to-print technology isn't so technical that you need someone with a degree in computer science to make it work. The secret is taking the digital and web-to-print technology the printing industry now offers and adapting it to your customer base in a planned and organized approach. Applying the 12 secrets will make your company stand out from the competition and drive your organization to higher profits



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The State of the Industry

Most printers are in a battle with their competition to get work. Printers are constantly looking for new technology and services that will give them the edge, yet many printers fail to see additional profits or sales when they do add new services. They want something that will make them different from the competition, sell itself, and cause customers to beat down their doors with new work.

With all of the new technology and services available, print buyers still report it is very hard to tell the difference among the printers in their market. When Printbuyersonline.com asked its print buying members to rate how effective they believe print suppliers are at communicating meaningful differentiation from their competition, it found that 65 percent thought their print supplier was either fair or poor in communicating why they were different from the competition. Only one percent rated print suppliers as excellent and only nine percent rated them very good.

PrintBuyersOnline.com is a website that provides free, quality education, solutions and resources to print buyers, production professionals, marketers and their suppliers. The organization encourages best practices and promotes the exchange of information between buyers and suppliers in a non-sales environment. Printers who want to know what customers are thinking about printing and the buying process should visit the site.

It seems printers may be adopting the new technology and services, but they are failing to tell their customers about the benefits. The new technology would give printers a reason to tell a customer why they should buy from them and how their technology makes the printer different from the competition. It doesn't seem to be happening.

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The old business model

To understand where we are going, we have to understand where we have been. Many quick and small commercial printers got into the business by providing black-and-white copies in a retail location. If businesses wanted business cards, letterhead and envelopes, they could go to the local printer on the corner and order small quantities with quick turnaround times. Small businesses flocked to the retail printer because they could quickly order small quantities at a low price. Most of the work was printed in black ink on small duplicator presses or toner-based copiers.

To keep a customer's cost down, printers recommended that customers create their own documents. Printers could quickly prepare direct image plates or make copies of the customer's original. Small businesses didn't have to maintain a large inventory of printed material since they could get delivery of just about any of their printed needs in a matter of days.

As business grew, printers expanded their business. First they added personal computers to provide limited typesetting and design work. Then they upgraded their presses to handle two-color ink work. As a printer gained more experience and confidence, he would increase his capabilities. Today's quick and small commercial printer has the ability to do full-color work on a variety of paper stock and offers design, mailing and bindery services. What distinguishes the smaller printer from his larger commercial printer counterpart is the size of the press used. The quick and small commercial printer works in 12 x 18 inch formats or smaller and specializes in shorter run lengths.

Why most printers are not making money

The business model that was once so successful for printers now keeps them from growing and being profitable. The old model was to have a visible retail location with high traffic so the print shop could become a logical physical extension of the customer's office. Many of the print orders would be finished while the customer waited. Work was typically printed in black ink or toner at sizes smaller than 11 x 17 inches. Paper

stocks were limited. The printer would duplicate documents from originals that were already created. Most of the jobs printed were forms and materials used to run the business. Printers were able to charge a higher price because customers had no other way to get the work done.

Much of the work that was the basis of the early printer's volume has disappeared. The work can now be produced on office computers and printers. Rather than getting 1,000 inventory forms printed, a company can keep the file on a computer and print the forms as needed. There is no longer a need for letterhead because a simple template in a word processing program can be printed as part of the original letter. Why keep an inventory of black-and-white printed material when it can be produced at pleasing quality as needed on an office desktop?

Many customers now consider most of the work once produced by the local retail printer a commodity. A commodity is anything that is supplied without qualitative differentiation across a given market. Customers who used to pay a premium for fast turnaround and convenience can now produce the same printed work in their office. The value of the printing dropped in the customers' eyes, forcing many printers to lower prices .

Some printers are now trapped being commodity printers. They don't know how to add value to the printed products they sell so they rely simply on having the lowest price to get customers to buy their printing. Sadly, industry studies report that only 25 to 30 percent of printing companies make money while others barely survive.

Printers don't make money because they don't understand how to run their businesses. There are numerous business ratios a printer can use to measure the progress and success of their operations. Different printing associations such as NAQP, NAPL and PIA closely monitor the industry and provide operating ratio studies that focus on specific segments of printing businesses. Most printers tend to ignore the wealth of material available that provides a template of best business practices. Printers tend to be craftsmen rather than business people and fail to get the business advice they need to prosper.

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Printers are not making money because customers cannot see what value the printer can offer. Printers continue to sell the same products and services they have always sold the same way they have always sold them and make no attempt to add value. To survive, a printer thinks he must become a low cost provider who knows all the ways to be the most efficient producer in the market. The average printer tries to squeeze out profits by cost savings rather than adding value. These printers are always in a price battle with their competitors.

Printers don't make money because they don't understand the new digital tools. The new tools are aimed at simplifying the production and purchasing process. A PDF file is the de facto standard for submitting and working with files, yet many printers still require customers to submit files in the native application. The Internet site can be more than just an electronic Yellow Pages ad, but few printers have made it an important communication tool. Prepress equipment and output devices are designed to allow for automation, but printers don't use them that way because they don't want to "lose control" of the job. The whole web-to-print movement means learning a new way to communicate with customers.

Printers don't make money because they are inefficient. Most printers run job shops where each order is handled as a unique custom job. Printers don't look for the similarities in the types of orders they receive and ignore any production standards. They accept any customer-created digital file without any information and lose money attempting to get it to print properly. Because they are so inefficient they spend more time producing a job and usually exceed price estimates. The inefficiencies lead to doubts about the quality and service that is provided, so the print order is priced low in an attempt to offset any complaints. Some printers believe if they sell it cheap, customers will overlook any quality or service issues. Because there are no production standards it is impossible to implement any digital or web-to-print services.

Printers also don't make money because they don't understand the value of the work they can produce. Many printers approach printing from a

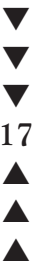
manufacturer's point of view. They mark up their production costs by a small percentage and hope that it will offer a margin of profits. When they do add production efficiencies, they lower their costs and pass the cost savings on to the customer. There is a high cost to adding digital and web-to-print services, but the services build a higher perceived value in the customer's mind for the material ordered.

Printers don't make money because they aren't organized. No one is in charge of production at most shops, so standards cannot be introduced and maintained. Work is scheduled based on which customer complains the loudest or which salesperson can negotiate the best delivery times with the different workstations throughout the shop. Without an organization with someone in charge there is no way to integrate the digital and web-to-print services. Each service becomes a product unto itself with different standards and procedures that, in many cases, cause the services to work against each other. Someone in the organization has to be responsible for ensuring that the work is being produced in the most economical, profitable and timely manner possible.

It isn't any wonder that most print owners feel underpaid and overworked. They don't have any control of their companies or know what's really happening with each order. They don't have time to do anything about it because they are so busy getting out the next job, whether it is profitable or not. They have invested in new technology that seems to drain resources rather than create new work. The whole digital and web-to-print concept has become more trouble than it is worth. The printer cannot see the value, so he can't translate that value to his staff or customers.

Now the good news

There is good news for quick and small commercial printers. The print buying market has changed, but for the better. Digital and web-to-print technology has leveled the playing field for the smaller shops. New technology will help quick and small commercial printers find more easily



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move out of the commodity printing market and provide value-added services. Customers are now buying more short-runs and requiring faster turnaround; something quick and small commercial printers have been providing for years. Manufacturers now provide equipment that allows printers to produce full-color, short-run work that can meet the quality and service needs of most customers. Printers can provide new and special services over the Internet that can expand their geographic reach and make it easier for customers to buy printing. Automation allows for faster turnaround and lower costs. Printers who have sold only on price can no longer afford to compete and are being squeezed out of business.

The market is poised for a new generation of digitally competent Web-based printers to provide high value, high profit printing services to marketing oriented small businesses. Since most businesses can produce many of their own commodity printing needs or buy the printing based on price, quick and small commercial printers have to use new services to attract new business. Most printers already have everything they need to attack this new market. They just need to go after the right customers.

The role of digital technology

Digital technology has changed the way printing is produced and how it is sold and ordered. Today customers use their own computers to create more than 50 percent of the originals for the work being produced in quick and small commercial print shops. The majority of customer-created documents are submitted over the Internet. Work is archived as digital files and is retrieved when the customer wants to order a reprint.

Because of digital and web-to-print technology, printers have extended their storefront to anywhere in the world that has a computer and an Internet connection. Custom customer portals can be created on the Internet to provide document libraries so the customer can easily reorder work around the clock. Custom web-to-print services can be offered which allow customers to customize pre-designed templates for items such as business cards or marketing collateral. Marketing projects can marry

Internet technology with custom printing to help customers target their customers with specific information.

This is all made possible because the original is digital. The digital original can be easily moved across the Internet, viewed, printed and then moved again.

Start with the basics

A successful digital printing business is not built on a single solution. It is a combination of business management, sales experience and technical savvy that makes a printer profitable. Success is measured in profits, not by volume. Unless the company is making money, the printer really can't be successful.

This book will concentrate on the aspects of using digital and web-to-print technology to move toward profitability and success. It does presuppose that the company is following basic business practices that can be supported by digital and web-to-print production and marketing techniques. Profiting from this technology involves a strategy that combines more than just equipment and software.

There are several excellent resources to help a printer learn to run a profitable printing business. Tom Crouser (www.crouser.com) publishes *Prospering: Putting the Business to Work for You and Your Family* and *Dead Printer Working: a Printer's Financial Survival Guide*. These two books can guide you through the business aspects of running a printing company. If you want to run your business profitably, Crouser's books will show you how.

Debra Thompson and Bill Greif (www.tgassociates.com) are the authors of *No More Rotten Eggs – 13 Steps to Hiring Grade AA Talent* and a variety of products specifically designed to help printing companies find and manage the right employees. Industry consultants John Stewart (www.quickconsultant.com) and Larry Hunt (www.larryhunt.com) produce reports and studies that help a printer make the right decisions relating to pricing, equipment purchases and financial questions. Dave Fellman

(www.davefellman.com) offers practical advice for improving sales efforts in a quick and small commercial print shop.

There are other sources of help. Trade publications such as *Quick Printing* magazine are an excellent source of advice and information. Trade associations also provide practical business information. NAQP, PIA, NAPL and other associations offer advice and counsel on the basic business practices for a quick or small commercial printing company. Local accounting firms, banks and government agencies can provide additional business information that can help a printing company succeed.

Unless the business is organized for success and the company follows basic business practices, any attempt to add digital and web-to-print services will be difficult and possibly devastating to the business itself. A good organization, timely and accurate financial information and an ongoing sales effort are necessary to ensure success when adding digital and web-to-print services. There are resources available to help a print owner learn to be a good businessperson. If you understand the business of printing, the digital technology becomes a tool to further your success.

It's a brave new world

Over the past decade, the Internet has become an important part of the fabric of the business community. It has allowed printers to expand their geographic reach and develop closer relationships with customers. The replacement of a paper-based document with a digital original has changed the way people communicate. Today's printing company can output or use a digital file a number of different ways. How the printing company controls the digital file is as important as how the file is finally used.

The new Web-based digital printing world can be overwhelming for the small printer because there are so many opportunities. Quick and small commercial printers usually have limited resources, so they must pick and choose which digital services to provide. They need to make the decision about what services to add based on their customers' needs, their



employees' expertise, the profitability of the services and their ability to budget properly so they can see project through to its final success.

Too often, printers will jump from providing one service to another based on the "industry buzz." Before they learn whether the first digital service they are attempting to add is profitable, they jump to another. This causes confusion both internally and among customers. No one understands the direction of the company or the benefits it can offer customers.

Digital printing services can mean many things. It can be as simple as taking a customer's computer file as an email attachment or as complicated as implementing a cross media marketing solution. Because it is so broad, it can become confusing when a printer is trying to plan and move his company to the next level.

Most digital services are tied closely to the Internet. Even a digital service as simple as accepting a customer-created file usually requires the customer to submit the file over the Internet. Digital services and web-to-print services quickly merge into the same service.

PIA/GATF has attempted to help printers define the approaches that can be used when a printer is considering adding web-to-print services. In the book, *Web-to-Print Primer*, Sarah McKibben and Julie Shaffer defined four categories to describe the web-to-print business models. They are print procurement, marketing/brand management, document management and workflow automation.

As the authors point out, crossover among the four models is rampant, but the definitions allow a printer to begin to organize the thought process for implementing and managing web-to-print services.

The definitions are important because all of the digital services that can be provided by a printer must take into consideration web-to-print services. Without the Internet, it will be almost impossible to communicate with customers in a way printers can remain profitable and efficient.

Print procurement is defined as simple e-commerce storefronts or broker sites. A typical printer uses his website as a way to receive a customer file.

Most websites have a Send File function that makes it easier for a customer to submit a file than attaching the file to an email. Print procurement is the business model that uses digital tools such as online ordering and online proofing to make it easy for customers to buy printing.

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The marketing and brand management category is described as a private, branded site for the ease of corporate/franchise collateral ordering and sites to manage marketing campaigns. This would include special portals that provide the customer the ability to add information into templates of commonly ordered documents, personalized URL services and content management.

McKibben and Shaffer define document management as fulfillment, mailing and inventory management. The printer offers a site that electronically warehouses printed material so customers can order as needed without having to contact a customer service representative or salesperson. There is usually no exchanging of files

They define the fourth business model as client-facing portals that lead directly to the print shop's internal production environment. Some printers are adding automatic PDF creation programs that turn a customer's file into a PDF file when it is submitted over the Internet. The customer plays a much larger role in the printer's production workflow and must follow stringent standards and rules to enjoy faster turnaround and lower costs.

As the authors noted, there is a great deal of crossover among the four business models, but they do provide a basis to discuss how a quick and small commercial print shop can use the digital technology. Some of the services provided by the business models will become standard offerings by the printing industry. Others will be specialized services that are offered to make the printer different from the competition. By breaking up the digital services into the four web-to-print categories, printers can decide which services they must have to compete and which services would offer the greatest profit opportunity to their companies.

The *Web-to-Print Primer* is available from www.gain.org.

The digital web-to-print world is constantly changing as more printers and customers adopt the business models. Quick and small commercial printers can profitably adopt the new business models, even on a small scale, and become the “digital expert” in their local market.





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Final Thoughts

Digital technology is playing a bigger role in the everyday operations of the quick and small commercial printing company. It starts with customer-created files and expands to automated production procedures, Web-based services, web-to-print, and VDP. Printers have hundreds of opportunities to save money with technology or increase sales with new digital services. Digital technology cannot be ignored.

Customer-created files have become a large portion of a printer's business. How a printer handles customer-created files will directly affect the printer's profits and his future.

More customers will create files for print. If a printer doesn't implement standards for dealing with the customer-created files, he will not be able to compete profitably.

Industry standards for customer-created files have evolved. Certain software applications are now supported by printers, others are not. Printers are charging for customer-created files that are outside the industry standards. PDF files are becoming more common, particularly since they can be edited and can help eliminate prepress problems.

The Internet has become an important communication tool. Not only does the Internet help move information between the customer and printer, but it also provides a platform to automate a number of functions once performed by skilled craftsmen. It also allows the printer to become a bridge between his customer and his customer's customers.

The printed page is still alive and well and will be for the foreseeable future. What many of the digital and Web-based services do is enhance the printed piece, making its message have an even greater impact on the receiver. Digital technology, the Internet and printing have converged to offer a powerful communication medium. The printer who can translate

this power into an understandable message for his customers will achieve a high degree of success.

The quick and small commercial printer can play an important role in this communication evolution. Small business will turn to quick and small commercial printers for the expertise and assistance to use the new technology. The printing industry has become more than just putting marks on paper and the quick and small commercial printers can lead their small business customers into an exciting future.





About the author

John A. Giles III is the owner of The Giles Group, a consulting and training company specializing in prepress issues in the quick and small commercial printing industry. Based in Winfield, West Virginia, Giles provides consulting on prepress productivity and digital sales issues for quick and small commercial printers with emphasis on the customer interface. His clients also include general business clients who purchase printing.

Giles is currently conducting digital audits for printing companies to help assure they understand the potential of their digital services, especially in meeting the ever-evolving industry standards for accepting customer-created digital files and using web-to-print services. He helps ensure the printers have procedures and training in place to make buying printing easier for the customer.

In addition to *12 Secrets for Digital Success*, he is the author of *The DTP PriceList*, a desktop publishing pricing guide for quick printers; *Digital Directions: A Digital Workflow Guide for Customer Files*; and *The Digital Original; Digital Dialog: How to talk with quick printing customers about computer files*.

Giles is also a special consultant and technology director for CPrint®, Certified Printers International, a printing franchise in North America (www.cprint.org). He is a contributing editor for *Quick Printing* magazine and has written for WhatTheyThink.com and Microsoft.com as well as a variety of digital-related articles for other industry trade publications.

He has been awarded the Industry Award of Distinction by the National Association of Quick Printers. The award is presented to a non-quick printer who has supported and consistently contributed to quick printing as a whole.

Giles conducts seminars on prepress and digital issues for printers at trade shows and conferences throughout North America. He has been

a featured speaker at the British Association of Print and Copyshops in London, Print Ontario in Canada, and the Pacific Printing Conference in Australia. His current speaking topics include digital marketing and sales, pricing and new digital technology services for the quick and small commercial printer.

He is a 1972 graduate of Marshall University, Huntington, West Virginia, with a degree in Journalism.

Giles can be contacted at The Giles Group, 110 Cannery Lane, Winfield, West Virginia 25213. His telephone number is 304-552-5363. He can be reached by email at john@johngiles.com. Giles also maintains a website on the Internet at www.johngiles.com.

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