



IN-PLANT PRINTING AND MAILING ASSOCIATION

INSIDEDGE

A Newsletter for In-House Printing and Mailing Professionals

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Washington State University Captures Award for Management Excellence



Washington State University in Pullman has earned IPMA's Management Award for its extraordinary performance in 2008. This annual award recognizes an outstanding corporate publishing and distribution operation that excels in efficient management practices to further the objectives of its parent company.

“WSU demonstrated great management skill in making significant advancements throughout 2008 in technology, processes, and green initiatives,” explains IPMA Awards Chairperson Rob Lingard. “The Management Award is not given to an individual, but rather presented to an entire team. At WSU each individual understands how his or her contributions serve to strengthen the whole university. Working together, this team has accomplished so much and could certainly serve as a model for other in-house operations.”

The Director of University Publishing at WSU, Mary Read, shares, “This award is a tribute to the entire University Publishing team, honoring the knowledge, experience, and work ethic each individual contributes every day. Amid dynamic changes in the communications industry, and today’s financial challenges, this team of professionals has chosen to embrace change and serve as a vibrant partner in Washington State University’s future. Our affiliation within University Relations and the support of Vice President Tim Pavish, are also important components of the unit’s success.”

By fully integrating the various units, this in-plant has created a highly dynamic environment, known for its productivity and efficiency and as a leader throughout the in-plant community. Some of the year’s highlights include:

FSC Certification and Green Initiatives

In support of the state of Washington’s commitment to the environment,



University Publishing embarked on an effort to implement best environmental practices into the printing plant. After considerable research and preparation, University Publishing was the first university in-plant in the entire country to achieve FSC Chain-of- Custody certification. “Our commitment to the program and our ability to place the FSC and other green trademarks

on our publications has been highly significant to our environmentally-minded clients,” notes Steve Rigby, Director of Printing Services.

Since receiving FSC certification, they have assisted numerous university in-plants in their pursuit. University Publishing continues to actively publicize other sustainable measures as well such as soy-based inks, ozone-friendly press solvents, a robust recycling program, and decreased material usage by utilizing the Indigo digital press whenever possible.

Productivity/Cross Training

“We continue to place a strong emphasis on cross-training and working across department reporting lines,” explains Rigby. “The staff has a firm understanding of organizational goals and how their contributions impact the overall success of the unit.” Remaining nimble in their work assignments, they frequently transition into the areas of highest work volume to expedite projects in a timely and cost effective manner. Great emphasis has been placed on cross-training, especially in the areas of digital printing, web graphic design, addressing and mailing. “This initiative has increased our ability to move work through to completion in times of short staffing or peak workloads. Additionally, it has infused an environment of caring and support among groups, working together to find effective solutions.” As part of the cross-training, an Apprentice Training Program was developed in their pressroom.

During 2008, the team processed:

- Nearly 5,500 print publications
- 15,000 copy transactions
- 349 web projects
- 8 million pieces of mail
- 40,000 student parcels
- 400 plus copyright information consultations
- And sold 11,000 scholarly books.

New Technology

Prepress

Prepress workflow was totally retooled in 2008. The first upgrade was the installation of the Rampage RIP, which more than doubled file processing speed. “We now have greater file storage capacity, enabling us to maintain files on the server until completed projects are delivered.”

The second step in the retooling was the addition of Metrix imposition software which is unique in the way it builds press forms and templates. “The learning curve was steep, but once training was completed, imposition productivity increased sharply, resulting in more efficient workflow,” Rigby says. The software allows the production manager to build jobs prior to jobs entering the production stage.

The third retooling component was an Epson 7800 large-format color proofer, installed to compliment their Epson 9000 color proofer. The new 7800 provides a broader color gamut for more precise color matching on their offset presses.

The fourth component was an EFI Fiery color management RIP and software package, enabling them to set up SWOP standard color profiles for use in profiling their presses, proofers, and using their current EYE 1 software to set up profiles for design displays.

Copy Centers

After several years of research and months of testing, they installed an Océ 2110 VarioPrint copier in the main copy center. In addition to its promise of quality and reliability, the machine offered the highest environmental benefits in support of their sustainability programs. Additionally they installed three reconditioned Océ 3165 copiers, one in each copy center location. Rigby notes, “Performance of the new equipment has exceeded our expectations.”

To compliment the print engines, a Prisma Prepare Document Management System was purchased for front end document preparation and manipulation, and Print Shop Mail for variable data and mail merge processing.

Vuetura Package Tracking

Mailing Services acquired a package tracking system for the Student Mail operation that has significantly enhanced accountability for all packages, from acceptance from USPS to delivery to the 23 residence halls. Since its installation in early February 2008, they have handled over 40,000 packages, averaging 300 plus packages daily.

PSI Color Laser Mail 3655

Having extensively researched more efficient methods to produce mail-ready envelopes and variable data postcards in 2008, they plan to install a PSI Color Laser Mail 3655 in 2009, anticipating this will open up new markets and new sources of revenue.

Web Development Expansion

As an early adopter of the parallel media model (print and web), they created a web services unit in 2003. In 2008 they expanded the service by merging web programmer teams from other units into one, streamlining equipment and personnel resources and most importantly adopting unified programming standards, systems and procedures. This merger positioned University Publishing to more effectively support the current needs for html e-mails, e-newsletters, web site development, audio, video and social media.

Promotions and Marketing

- Sustainable Printing Seminar entitled, “Sustainable Publications: Making Environmentally Responsible Decisions in Your Print Materials”
- Affordable Mail and Print Seminar
- Announcements and press releases regarding University Publishing’s FSC Certification.

Staffing

University Publishing’s in-plant includes 53 permanent and 30 temporary staff members, all of whom display personal pride in their work and value the team approach to solving challenges. They demonstrate respect and support for one

another and their customers through their healthy work ethic, adaptability, and commitment to the university's goals.

Budget

Operating as a self-sustaining unit, University Publishing charges university departments for graphic design, printing, copying, web and addressing services based on budgeted hourly rates and price lists. The unit is also responsible for administering state-allocated funds to operate the university copyright office, academic press, and mailing services.

Washington State University was recognized for its managerial excellence at IPMA's Annual Awards Banquet in Rochester.