Simon Fraser University Celebrates New Levels of Efficiency Thanks to WebCRD

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Turning 40 can be difficult. Every day can bring new aches and pains. Or turning 40 can be cause for celebration as you hit your stride and enter what could be your most productive years.

For Simon Fraser University's in-house print center, the aches and pains came years earlier. Serving the needs of over 25,000 students and 3500 faculty and staff over the course of 40 years, the Print Center was struggling with inefficient processes, increasing workloads, and unhappy customers.

In years past, the print center was divided into a Duplication Department and a Printing Department—each with their own processes and priorities. "They were both looking to maintain their revenue streams," explains Raj Nadrajan, Director of Document Solutions, who joined SFU in 2000 with the task of fixing the broken system.

Each of the two departments maintained a separate work order process and relied on the customer to understand where to properly send their jobs. In some cases, when a customer submitted a job calling for color covers and a black and white body, it was up to the customer to fill out two distinct work orders, doubling the work and the chance for error.

Simon Fraser University's motto translates to "We are ready". With WebCRD, SFU's Print Center is ready too!

This led to confusion for the customer when submitting jobs and for the print centers who were attempting to produce and bill the jobs. "Customers were not happy. Jobs were not getting done on time. We had to make some drastic changes," remembers Nadrajan.

Drastic, and welcomed change

That change began with the consolidation of the Duplication and Print Centers. First to go were the forms and processes that had been so labor-intensive for customers submitting jobs and the personnel fulfilling them.

Those may have been the first changes, but they were by no means the last. The focus of the consolidated Print Center began to change to customer satisfaction with Nadrajan at the helm. "Previously, customer focus was not the biggest priority, nor delivery time, nor quality. But I just can't say no to a customer. And if I say yes, I have to deliver."

That promise to deliver became reality when Nadrajan partnered with Rochester Software Associates (RSA) to install WebCRD™, RSA's Portal to the Print Center as the focal point of the Print Center's new way of doing business.

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>
> Raj Nadrajan
> Director of
> Document Solutions

PDF is Power

After exhaustive research, Nadrajan came to the conclusion that WebCRD was the answer. In the end it was the power of Adobe® PDF for electronic job submission and management that won him over. "SurePDF™ was the key to acquiring the system."

"There were some remote locations a short distance away and they weren't very happy with their local printer. We decided we had to win their business." But with the old way of doing business, the jobs from these locations took 3 days—one day to get in, one to produce, and one to get out.

"WebCRD brought all of the power to send jobs electronically," explains Nadrajan. "Before, without a PDF workflow, jobs would come to the server with missing font issues..." Now, with WebCRD, users submit jobs with 100% fidelity using RSA's SurePDF, based on Adobe PDF JobReady™.

SurePDF uses the users' fonts and applications to guarantee creation of an accurate, print ready Adobe PDF. The user approves the document before it is sent to the Print Center. Quality is ensured and ticketing options are entered on-line, to avoid any mistakes due to re-keying of data. Job status is delivered electronically, eliminating phone calls to the Print Center.

"WebCRD's PDF capabilities, complete job ticketing flow-through to the print engine, and full web submission solution is unique," explains the Program Manager for Production Systems who was instrumental in bringing SFU and RSA together. "There isn't a product that offers the breadth of functionality that WebCRD does. RSA was absolutely outstanding in project managing the implementation. It was quite impressive to see."

Knowledge is Power

WebCRD not only dramatically improved how jobs came into the Print Center, it also greatly increased the information available about the shop's constant stream of jobs and revolutionized the ability to manage them.

"To be honest, if it weren't for WebCRD, I wouldn't have known exactly how busy the shop is," says Nadrajan. "At any time, there can be up to 300 jobs in the system. That's a lot for a 14-person shop."

And he can track those jobs from anywhere with nothing more than a Web browser. "I can be in any part of the world and know how the shop is doing." That helps streamline operations and speed jobs through the system. "I can send an email that says that there are 8 or 10 jobs that are getting behind and the guys will take care of it."

WebCRD gives customers the same power to check on the status of jobs. "WebCRD's greatest power is getting our customers close to us and giving them the power to check on the jobs," explains Nadrajan. "Customers are raving about it."

The bottom line

And WebCRD helps the SFU Print Center in another critical way...on the bottom line.

As a self-funding center that receives no money from the University, it is critical that the Print Center charges for every job that they produce. WebCRD makes that easier than ever before. WebCRD integrates with the Print Center's accounting and billing software to track each job and assure that every job is properly and quickly billed back to the job's originator.

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The result is more revenue rolling into the Print Center. Nadrajan has spoken at several industry events singing the praises of WebCRD with such comments as "WebCRD has made the difference in our business. I don't know where we'd be without it. In less than a year we have processed 17,000 orders with WebCRD, and last month we received only three paper work orders. Customers love the system!" Raj adds "With WebCRD I exposed production issues in my shop that I didn't know I had. We have addressed those and are more profitable than ever. The price of WebCRD was not small, but it has already paid for itself."

WebCRD also improves the bottom line in another way—helping to not only increase the money coming in, but also reducing the money going out. WebCRD's job management and tracking capabilities arm Nadrajan with the information to quantify the number of impressions that need to be done by week's end, better schedule overtime, and hold down costs.

Nadrajan adds "I have no idea how I would manage to run this shop without WebCRD. It is a tool I could not live without."

A better kind of pain

With WebCRD as the center of the shop's operations, the SFU Print Center now has pains of another kind...growing pains. "In days where everyone thinks printing is going down, we are continuing to grow," says Nadrajan. "The number of jobs coming to the shop is greatly increased..... But WebCRD is helping us commit to new jobs and to deliver."

"At the end of the day, I think that when it comes to an in-plant shop, WebCRD is the best system available. It is doing everything we want it to do, and more." Now that's reason for celebration.