SERIGRAPH

SERIGRAPH ACHIEVES BUSINESS GROWTH AND A COMPETITIVE EDGE WITH THE HELP OF APP TECHNOLOGIES AND PROGRESS SOFTWARE

Managing any business is difficult. But the challenges of managing a business with hundreds of franchisees across North America can be extraordinarily complex. The effort involved in coordinating marketing efforts, point of purchase materials, and instore promotions while assuring that all elements of a campaign are in the right place at the right time is massive. To add to the complexity, more stores and restaurants are running localized promotions which also require support. Streamlining the processes for communication and delivering the required products and services to customers in a timely, efficient way are vital to maintaining success in today's fast paced, on demand world.

Serigraph, a market leader providing Point of Purchase (POP) solutions to the Quick Service Restaurant (QSR), retail and other consumer products industries, understands all too well the urgency of its customers to ensure speed-to-market and superior customer service. Offering creative technologies and a suite of 360° services, Serigraph enables its customers to differentiate their brands and stand out at the point of sale. The company provides clients with a "soup to nuts" offering of services, including graphic design, full-service production, fulfillment, web ordering and tracking systems, planning, warehousing, inventory management and installation.

"The industries we serve are marketing driven, so speed-to-market is imperative to their success," explains Kevin Newton, E-Business Systems Architect for Serigraph. "Often there is a media component to promotions, such as radio or television commercials, which means our deadlines are firm and unyielding. It is vital that all of the participating stores or restaurants receive the promotional and point of purchase materials on time. But the reality is that throughout the process—i.e. product design and development, approvals, order placement, etc.—dates often slip. But no matter what happens throughout that cycle, we cannot miss our targets. Bottlenecks are inevitable, and it is essential that we have the technology and processes in place to manage any issues that come our way."

For example, during the fall a restaurant may run a promotion across hundreds or thousands of its franchisees to add pumpkin shakes or apple cider. That request comes in, Serigraph builds an order specific to each of those restaurants to support the new promotion, and then pushes the entire order out to all of the franchisees in one batch.

Two years ago, Serigraph engaged App Technologies—a leading Progress and WebSpeed® business application technology firm—to update Serigraph's webbased

CHALLENGE

Support customers' requirements for speed-to-market of promotional and Point of Purchase (POP) materials and improved services to their franchisees

SOLUTION

Worked with Progress Partner App Technologies to add complimentary components to existing web-based fulfillment and project management solution by recently adding online catalog ordering functionality

BENEFIT

Doubled number of local and national promotions fulfilled per year for existing customers; reduced promotional cycle from 13 weeks to six on average; 99.9% accuracy of promotional fulfillment; decreased customers' shipping costs; saved customers hundreds of thousands of dollars by decreasing obsolete inventory; grew business by 15%

PROGRESS

ezPOP solution for on-line fulfillment and project management services. ezPOP enables Serigraph to pull together everything it needs to support its customers' promotions—from beginning to end.

ezPOP allows Serigraph to build orders based on how a specific store or restaurant is organized. Once the information is in the system, Serigraph knows exactly what products they need to manufacture and how to fulfill the orders. If there is a tight deadline, Serigraph can set up zone shipping to pack the boxes that need to go to the furthest zone first. All of the data is organized inside of ezPOP, streamlining the entire process and enabling both Serigraph and their customers to meet their goals and deadlines.

Serigraph's customers are also able to perform test promotions with ezPOP. For instance, they can launch a limited promotion in a small regional area as a test and then expand the promotion nationally, if it proves successful.

"ezPOP enables us to be extremely nimble, allowing us to make changes up to the last minute and still make our deadlines for our customers." Newton says the underlying Progress database is rock-solid. "It just runs and runs—it never goes down, and the system requires very little administration which means we can focus on providing more value to our customers rather than troubleshooting technology issues."

ENHANCING EZPOP TO MEET EVOLVING CUSTOMER REQUIREMENTS

Recently, Serigraph engaged App Technologies to develop an eCatalog component for its ezPOP solution to support circumstantial orders and localized promotions. Serigraph's existing ezPOP solution managed ordering fulfillment for bulk orders, but some customers were looking to empower their individual stores or franchisees to quickly and easily place their own ad hoc orders.

For example, if one of the translites on a restaurant's drive-thru menu blows down, that franchisee would need to contact its headquarters to order a new part. If a franchisee wants to rerun a promotion that proved highly successful in the past, or run a localized promotion—e.g. breakfast burritos in the southwest, it would again need to place a special order using a manual process. When you multiply those types of issues or requests by the hundreds or thousands, the process becomes highly cumbersome and inefficient for everyone involved.

Serigraph provided App Technologies with an overview of what it was looking to accomplish with its eCatalog. "We wanted a traditional shopping-cart application, and we wanted something that would easily integrate with ezPOP," says Newton. "Within six weeks the new system evolved from a vision sketched on a piece of paper to a fully-functioning product."

The eCatalog functionality of ezPOP now allows customers to quickly and easily search for their products and place ad hoc orders. The orders are automatically sent to Serigraph which manages the entire 360° process from order and printing through fulfillment and shipping.

SERIGRAPH IMPROVES ITS COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE BY DELIVERING SUBSTANTIAL, ONGOING BENEFITS TO ITS CUSTOMERS

Serigraph has realized a significant competitive advantage with ezPOP and the ezPOP web ordering eCatalog capability, recently securing Culver's as a new customer—an expanding franchise system with more than 423 restaurants in 17 states. Other customers have expressed serious interest in the solution, including an international multi-billion dollar energy company.

"ezPOP and the new eCatalog functionality give us a significant competitive advantage... The efficiency, productivity and cost reduction benefits to our customers are tremendous."

Kevin Newton
E-Business Systems Architect
Serigraph

"Offering a web-based solution is a huge competitive advantage, and being able to combine that with all of the other services that we offer makes us unique to the industry," explains Newton. "There are very few companies that can manage the entire process from order through shipment. Many customers are constantly trying to cobble together three or four companies to do one thing. Our ability to manage the entire process under one roof on an integrated basis is a huge advantage for our customers."

The system has enabled Serigraph to double the number of local and national promotions it fulfills per year for existing customers and, as a result, Serigraph has increased product production and overall business. In industries where success is driven by promotional responsiveness, Serigraph has demonstrated the ability to reduce the promotional cycle by more than 50%. Serigraph's promotional fulfillment is currently tracking toward 99.9% accuracy, achieving 56 parts per million, far better than industry averages, with an end target of 34 parts per million. In addition, previous dependence on expediting shipments has been greatly reduced, an expense that is five times more costly than standard freight. Serigraph is saving customers hundreds of thousands of dollars by decreasing obsolete inventory. The end result: in this tough economy Serigraph has managed to grow its business by 15% in just under two years.

"ezPOP and the new eCatalog functionality, give us a significant competitive advantage because we are now a true 360° business with the ability to meet all of our customers' needs," explains Newton. "The efficiency, productivity and cost reduction benefits to our customers are tremendous. A top 20 QSR chain reduced its entire production cycle—from order through to shipping—from 13 weeks down to just four weeks."

"We are excited to see the results of App Technologies' work at Serigraph," said Scott Blaubach, Vice President of App Technologies. "Developing practical custom solutions that add significant business value to an organization is our goal. We look forward to continuing our partnership with Serigraph and Progress Software."

A CASE STUDY: CULVER'S REDUCES PRODUCTION TIME, IMPROVES INVENTORY MANAGEMENT AND DELIVERS BETTER SERVICE TO ITS FRANCHISEES WITH SERIGRAPH

Serigraph's decision to enhance ezPOP with an online shopping cart was initially driven by Culver's' requirement to ease fulfillment, improve accuracy and reduce costs for its promotional campaigns through the adoption of an online catalog ordering system.

"We are an organization of 423 restaurants in 17 states," explains Anne Jensen, Brand Manager for Culver's. "Each restaurant is individually owned and operated, so we essentially have 423 customers that are constantly in need of new point of purchase material."

Prior to choosing Serigraph, Culver's was working with printers that did not offer an online ordering system, so it found itself acting as a call center for its franchisees. "They would place their order over the phone with our advertising agency who was managing our printer. It was a very inefficient process that posed three major problems for our business. First, it wasn't a good service to our franchise partners who needed a single place where they could quickly and easily browse for information and products specific to their business. Second, the process for placing an order was limited to regular business hours. Lastly, the ordering system was so flawed, and the number of POP options so large and complex, that inevitably the franchisees would order the wrong products. We realized we weren't giving them the tools to be successful, so we picked up the costs of those reshipments."

When Culver's reviewed partnership opportunities with new printers, one of the "must have" requirements was an online ordering system. Jensen says one of the reasons Culver's chose Serigraph is because it was the only vendor they looked at that could offer an online catalog

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Anne Jensen
Brand Manager
Culver's

with customized profile views within the catalog. "For example, we have eight menu boards. We wanted to make sure that when a franchisee logged in they only saw POP that was appropriate for their specific menu board."

Today, 70% of Culver's' franchisees are using the eCatalog and 100% are using ezPOP. Jensen says response from the franchisees has been fantastic. "Since the launch, the only phone calls we get about the system or POP is if a new manager takes over and misplaced the password."

Jensen says Culver's has realized significant benefits for both its own business and for its franchisees. "Our production process for printing, kitting and shipping has decreased from 13 weeks to just a few weeks." And for ad hoc orders that come in through the online shopping cart, Serigraph is able to turn those around within hours versus Culver's' previous method that took weeks.

Culver's has made significant improvements in regards to inventory management. "Prior to our relationship with Serigraph we didn't have a good handle on inventory levels, the popularity of certain items or, in general, what the cycle is for franchisees to be ordering POP. But since using Serigraph, we have gained far more insight and visibility into our inventory history and needs, and consequently have spent far less this year on obsolescence than in years past."

Jensen says Culver's and its franchisees are saving money insofar as they are paying less in shipping because they are getting the right POP the first time around. And the franchisees are better able to control what is being ordered and in what quantities. "Since working with Serigraph we have improved our business, improved our customers' business and we are providing a much higher level of service to our franchisees."

THE VALUE OF LEVERAGING EXISTING ASSETS

Serigraph just completed work with App Technologies on a new feature called Instant Art which allows customers to select and download images to support smaller, local promotions—for example, adding a logo to a banner to support a high school football game. Over the next six to twelve months, Serigraph plans to work with App Technologies to develop a web-to-print solution that will empower users to design their own customized signs.

Newton advises other companies looking for additional functionality to consider leveraging their existing assets. "Rather than implementing a new system from scratch to gain the shopping cart feature we wanted, we worked with App Technologies to enhance our existing solution. In six weeks we had what we needed. Clearly this was a less costly route. It demonstrates that reinvesting in what an organization has, even making just a minor tweak, can deliver a tremendous return to an organization."

"Leveraging our broad application development expertise made App Technologies the best choice for Serigraph and their Progress-based application environment," said Blaubach. "We continue to successfully work with organizations to build upon the value of their existing Progress applications while delivering new advanced solutions and technologies to their environment."

ABOUT SERIGRAPH

Serigraph provides creative technologies and a suite of 360° services that enable our customers to differentiate their brands and stand out at the point of sale. Serigraph offers clients graphic design, full-service production, fulfillment, web ordering and tracking systems, planning, warehousing, inventory management and installation. Headquartered in West Bend, Wisconsin, Serigraph employs people in the U.S., Mexico, and Asia to service companies with operations all over the world. www.serigraph.com/Specialty-Graphics.htm

ABOUT APP TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

POWERED BY PROGRESS

App Technologies is a leading Progress and WebSpeed® consulting firm specializing in the development of custom web business applications and application enhancements. In conjunction with its consulting services, App Technologies provides AppPro for WebSpeed, a Progress WebSpeed development framework and productivity tool for web and mobile application development. App Technologies has delivered solutions to a wide range of organizations including manufacturing, bio-medical, automotive, print services, software development, and retail businesses. www.apptechnologies.com

PROGRESS SOFTWARE

Progress Software Corporation [NASDAQ: PRGS] is a global software company that simplifies the development, deployment and management of business applications on-premise or in the cloud, on any platform or device, to any data source, with enhanced performance, minimal IT complexity and low total cost of ownership.

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