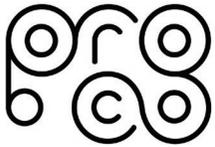




ProCo reinvents printing services as a marketing operations business

ProCo has been an industry leader almost since its first investment in digital output. Now positioned as a marketing operations business, ProCo uses its experience and comprehensive resources to work with its customers to increase their sales and profitability. Using digital and conventional printing, web-to-print and fulfilment services to create data-rich products for maximum effectiveness.



Industry sector: Print-based Marketing Services

Business name: ProCo

Headquarters: Sheffield, UK

Testimonial from: Jon Bailey, managing director

HP solution: HP Indigo 7800 Digital Press, HP Indigo 7600 Digital Press, HP Indigo 7500 Digital Press, HP Indigo 7000 Digital Press

Annual turnover: £14 million

Website: proco.com, conceptcomms.com



Challenge

“ProCo is not about delivering commoditised print. It’s about working closely with companies to deliver highly effective marketing campaigns using the best methods available to us. Print is a major part of the solutions we provide, but it’s certainly not the only one.”

Jon Bailey, managing director, ProCo



Changing expectations and delivering results

“Your marketing. Materialised’. This sums up what ProCo is about today,” says Jon Bailey, managing director, ProCo. “We deploy a range of services and techniques to provide end-to-end marketing campaigns.”

ProCo’s customers are from a wide range of sectors spread over the whole of the UK and mainland Europe with print production worldwide through print networks, though Bailey doesn’t think market sectors are particularly relevant when working with customers.

“Although the sector is important to understand the business, what’s more relevant is the type of company we work with; it doesn’t matter what market they’re in. The important factor is sharing the vision and mind-set and to be open to what we can do for them,” he says. “Our biggest challenge is to find ways to help our customers overcome their challenges. To do that, we need to continue our investment – in people and equipment. Typically, the challenges they face are budget, resources or sales.

“What we can do is to find ways of maximising the effect of their resources using a variety of means,” he adds. “To that end, we’ve been investing in our tech team, processes and environmental initiatives.

“When companies began coming out of the recession and were starting to ramp up their sales and marketing activities, we wanted to ensure that we were able to meet their new requirements and began looking at the latest digital presses.”

Solution

“The HP Indigo 7800 Digital Press is another step-change in the evolution of digital printing. New features, ease of use, improved colour and print enhancements combine to make this a press that is exciting our customers and prospects.”

Jon Bailey, managing director, ProCo



Redefining the terms of print

The launch of the HP Indigo 7800 Digital Press coincided well with ProCo’s decision to invest in a new press, and after several inspections, it was installed at the Sheffield facility in October 2014.

“The HP Indigo 7800 replaced two 5000-series presses,” Bailey explains. “We have an HP Indigo 7600 Digital Press here, and two HP Indigo presses at the Concept Communications site in Stansted. Our plan is to have a full interchange between the two sites to accommodate capacity and to use the best press for each job.”

ProCo often uses a hybrid approach for direct mail. Digital print from an HP Indigo press, static litho content, and personalised messages imprinted by laser on litho-printed shells may all be found in a single mailing.

“Our turnarounds for digital are 24-48 hours maximum, depending on the job,” Bailey says. “Litho jobs are shipped in 3-4 days max. Our overall revenues from digital and litho are essentially equal.”

Bailey is enthusiastic about the inline spectrophotometer for automatic colour control; the improved user interface; the white ink and the Enhanced Productivity Mode (EPM) which enables printing up to 160 colour pages per minute.

“The EPM works extremely well. Some months, more than 90 per cent of print on the HP Indigo 7800 is done using it. Overall, on all presses, we use it for about 60 per cent of our work,” he says.

Result

“We’ve used a number of the special effects of the HP Indigo 7800 Digital Press and are experimenting with more. The new colour management system is a major improvement and we’ve found it far better at handling jobs that are colour-critical. Also, we’re updating our MIS system and will integrate it with the new Smart Scheduling feature.”

Jon Bailey, managing director, ProCo



A message worth repeating

“We find that the modern digital printing message needs to be put out again and again. We started promoting the capabilities of the HP Indigo 7800 Digital Press with a targeted mailing of 380 pieces,” Bailey explains. “We’ve had a nine per cent response rate resulting in 35 appointments and we’re discussing £120,000 worth of new work. We converted £15,000 within two weeks. What’s clear is that people are knocked out by what they see, and they didn’t realise it was possible.”

ProCo has been running thick and uncoated stocks, (the press can handle up to 350g/m² coated and 400g/m² uncoated) and metallic substrates. It’s also been ‘sandwich printing’ on acetate. Sandwich printing is where two CMYK layers are separated by one or more layers of white.

“It’s often used in label printing, but it’s great for memorable direct mail and it looks amazing!” Bailey says. “All of these things can help companies drive uplift in sales, and we can help them make it cost-effective, too.”

Bailey says that ProCo isn’t interested in working with ‘suppliers’.

“We’re looking for long-term relationships with partners,” he says. “HP has done a fantastic job moving the industry forward. The service continues to improve; it understands its customers and continues to evolve and innovate; I think it’s clearly leading digital printing technology.”