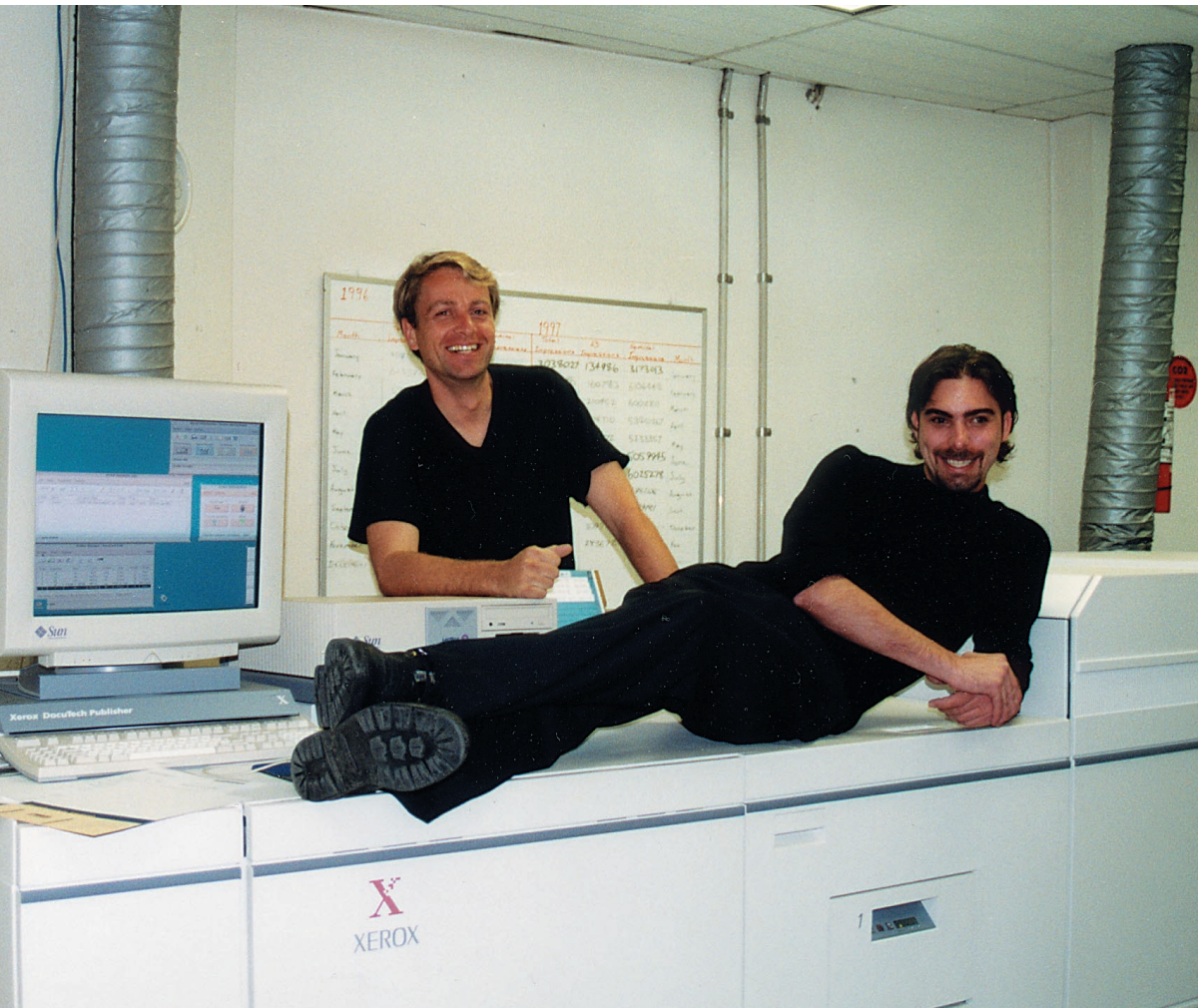


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PUBLISHING CENTRE

CASE STUDY

Sydney printer uses digital technology to give traditional offset a new lease of life.

An SOS normally implies a need for distress flares and panic stations. Yet the Sydney print business with the same name exudes a confidence and commitment to technology that guarantees to get you out of almost any fix.

With a large offset print premises and an inner-city digital print shop, SOS Printing is well positioned to make the best of both worlds. According to **Michael Schulz**, SOS Printing's IT manager, this straddling of technologies provides the perfect platform for flexible communication.

"For some applications, offset print isn't suitable, particularly with print volumes

SOS DEMAND

FOR SOME APPLICATIONS, OFFSET PRINT ISN'T SUITABLE,
PARTICULARLY WITH PRINT VOLUMES DECREASING



decreasing. By combining it with digital print it gets a new lease of life."

Print on demand at your fingertips

In addition, this commitment to digital workflow means SOS can give remote access print on demand to its customers. A nationwide accessible web server hosts clients' computer training manuals for printing in Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, Sydney or Perth.

"With FTP access they can update and download the manuals on demand," explained Schulz. "It eliminates wastage and there's a quick turnaround."

The SOS Demand Publishing Centre in Sydney's CBD boasts Xerox DocuPrint 6135 and 6180 production publishers and three DocuTech 135 high speed black and white printers, as well as Xerox Digipath workflow. This digital print power is used to good effect enhancing the offset product.

*"We have had a lot of success combining both digital and offset work together," explained DocuTech manager, **Brett Patterson**. "The speed at which you can carry out short, digitally printed runs gives us the edge over traditional set-up times."*

He cites a training manual print job that came into the city store with just over 24 hours turnaround.

"The shells were printed offset, but then we overprinted them with black using the Xerox DocuTech 6180."

Requiring nine mylar tabs to view, it was the sort of job that once would have required

hand collating - demanding plenty of time at the finishing stage.

"With the automatic collator on the Xerox DocuTech 6180 the job was collated on-line, saving us plenty of time in the bindery," said Patterson. "Combine that with the speed of digital printing and we had no problem meeting the tight deadline."

Patterson sees a lot of growth in digitally printing A3 size jobs, purely for that reason.

"Digital print makes it easier to do split runs; the first 25 can be done in an hour which is something you can't achieve with offset. There is no need to print 500 sheets in one go."

Making use of databases

The business is also experiencing sustained growth in variable data printing, using software package PrintShop Mail to send jobs to the Xerox digital printers.

"The program means we are able to carry out mail merges quickly from a large variety of document sources, with any number of variable fields, both text and illustrations."

Recent jobs include shareholder annual meeting registration forms for retailer David Jones, with variable fields of barcodes and addresses. In a two-step process, digital print is also allowing offset to get into the variable act.

"Some membership cards were printed offset in the factory, perforated to business card size, then the mailmerge was overprinted in black, using the Xerox DocuTech 6135. It was a total run of 10,000 and each membership card had a different name and address."

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