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### **P3 Software Rescues Printing Company**

There are few things more catastrophic to any company, let alone a printing operation, than a fire that destroys much of its equipment and facilities.

Yet this is exactly the tragedy that occurred at Ball Media's production and printing facility in Brantford, Ontario, on April 10, 2011. The company, which began as a CD and DVD replicator, had branched off into providing printing services for CD and DVD packaging, as well as books, corporate catalogs, and even trade show displays for a variety of clients.

"Our facility was a 12,000 square foot space that held all of the company's equipment—including digital printing equipment and large-format printers," says John Ball, president of Ball Media. "We lost everything in the fire, including all of our phone lines, computers and printing equipment." He adds that all the company had left was its database of artwork and a customer list.

"The fire forced us to outsource all of our print work," Mr. Ball attests. For the next seven days, he worked virtually non-stop on his home computer looking for a print procurement system that could accommodate Ball Media's very special circumstances. "I ended up trying nine different software print procurement systems," he claims. "But they were all too complicated to use."

Then Mr. Ball discovered P3 Expeditor software. "A few of the features that impressed me right away were the system's ease of use and its ability to analyze information," he says. By entering the client's specification information one time, P3 was able to request quotes from print suppliers and easily provide an apples-to-apples price comparison between each vendor.

"Before P3, we would sit in a room with a calculator and notepads trying to figure out which quotes were most cost effective for our clients," he says. "All of our core vendors had different formats which we would then have to transcribe for the customer."

Now, Mr. Ball says, they can input the information a single time to build print specifications, generate quotes from suppliers, create custom proposals, choose a vendor and order a job. When the job is approved, P3 can also generate purchase orders and invoices, and integrate directly with the QuickBooks accounting application.

"From start to finish, [P3 Expeditor] has eliminated about 17 administrative steps from our process," he attests. "It used to take us a long time to generate quotes—now, if we're working with known

specifications, we can generate a quote within a half hour; most custom quotes can be generated the same day.”

Communication between Ball Media’s clients and vendors has also been significantly streamlined with P3. Several standard messages—including pre-scripted requests for quote (RFQs), reminders, job award or decline, work orders, bidding reports, client proposals and purchase orders—make sending notifications to both clients and suppliers simple. These messages can also be tailored to convey Ball Media’s unique message. In addition, quotes, proposals and other documentation can be customized with the company’s logos and letterhead.

Once jobs are awarded, P3’s tracking system sorts active jobs and helps Ball Media remind vendors of impending due dates. This information is then archived for report generation. “In addition to maintaining our database of existing suppliers, it also tracks each vendor’s areas of expertise, their scheduling performance, past job specifications and any other relevant information,” Mr. Ball says. In addition, P3 can generate reports comparing suppliers’ performance, how many projects are won or lost, the total number of orders completed as well as other factors.

“We can take a job from start to finish by just entering the client’s information a single time,” Ball says.

Ball attests to P3 Expedito’s training systems and customer support as being key factors in choosing the system for its printing procurement needs. “P3 did a very comprehensive training demonstration through a webinar,” he says. “And, they’re available all of the time, they fix problems fast and they’re willing to customize the program based on our individual needs.”

“Our goal was to create a print procurement system that was affordable, easy to use and could be easily scaled to an operation’s size,” claims Bob Yancich, P3 Expedito’s chief operating officer. “With P3, we created a simple, focused system that allows companies to build efficiencies, save a ton of money and expertly manage their print procurement tasks.”

Mr. Yancich claims that P3 is a system that can grow depending on the needs of its clients. In fact, P3 has added features to its software based on Ball Media’s needs—which it then incorporated into the software’s function for all of its users. “[Ball Media] requested us to create custom job specification templates which could be routed through P3’s customer access portal (CAP),” he says.

There is a link on Ball Media’s website where new or existing clients can input their job specification data which will then automatically flow into the P3 System at Ball Media. “The neat thing is the system will send a confirmation email containing a job summary and a unique link to a log-in for the client,” Mr. Yancich says. “This link will provide tools for the client to view the job status and create new job requests—which will automatically flow to the P3 system at Ball Media.”

“Now, we receive an email notification requesting a job with the specifications already defined in our online portal,” Mr. Ball says. “From that information, we can request quotes, send email reminders, get pricing information to generate a proposal, accept or decline the project, generate a work order, track the project’s progress through completion and even generate the final invoice.” He claims what is so nice about P3 is they can even do any of these functions remotely. “We don’t even have to be in the office to do all of this—we can be on an airplane and relay the same information.”

In fact, P3 Expeditor has been so beneficial to Ball Media's operations, Mr. Ball claims that they've decided not to purchase new printing equipment and instead outsource all of its clients' printing needs.

"If it weren't for [P3 Expeditor], I don't think we would have made it," says Mr. Ball. "It was a big part in saving our business."