The Herning AS story, "Success with Web based 1:1 Solutions"

Partner Herning A/S is a Value Added Reseller of Printing equipment and solutions, based in Herning, Denmark. The company grew from six to about 50 employees in seven years. Their focus is to sell integrated printer and software solutions. According to the Danish version of Computer World, Partner Herning is the most successful Value-added reseller in Denmark. Partner Herning has reported a revenue growth in the year 2002 of over twenty percent, while their profit has doubled compared to the previous year.

How is it possible for a printer concessionaire to be so successful in this economic climate? What is the secret of their success?

The Bottom Line

According to Poul Sand, Owner and Managing Director at Partner Herning, these questions can be answered with one word: Solutions! "We believe that just selling printers is a dying business" explains Sand. "We want to build print volume with solutions. The only way to achieve this is to focus on building solutions around the printer" Sand continues: "Generally, the price of print devices is coming down, while competition is increasing. This means you often have to lower the price of the printer to get the business. We don't do this. Instead we hired document solution specialists, who are dedicated to sell and implement complete solutions to customers.

In the end we sell the printer at full price and get a fair margin on the solution. On the other hand, the customer is happy because he's able to produce more, at lower costs, and with improved efficiency. Partner Herning offers Color management solutions, PDF based workflow solutions, Content Management Solutions, Invoicing and Scanning solutions and Automated Print solutions.

Variable Data Printing

Especially the Automated Printing Solutions is showing a big growth potential. The price and complexity of implementing automated web based variable data printing projects have prevented most printer vendors to get involved. Partner Herning has recently started to deliver this solution, using PrintShop Mail for the actual variable data merging.

"We have worked on web based 1:1 solutions using advanced variable data printing tools for several years" says Christian Lewis, Project Director at Partner Herning. "But these solutions are just too expensive, so we did not do a lot of business here. PrintShop Mail is a mail merge package that proved to be equally advanced, but it is much more affordable for customers who want to get started with automated variable data printing. PrintShop Mail is well known, but I think only a few people have seen the automated printing functionality as we use it."

Just The Facts

Recently, Partner Herning has implemented automated variable data print jobs at twelve locations, with different applications, ranging from online ordering and production of personalized travel brochures, business cards and posters, to Just-in-Time production of packaging and shipping labels. In all these cases.

Partner Herning has developed a customized Production Manager that controls PrintShop Mail and utilizes its automated print facilities. Once the variables are linked to the template, the preview is first sent to the customer in low–resolution format for verification. Upon approval the final document, including the right impositioning, cutting marks and high resolution images, goes directly into production. It can also be automatically delivered as a print-ready file.

The production printing can be done at the customer site or at any other location, regardless of whether the application is hosted on Partner Herning's web server or locally at the customer site. The workflow can be determined by the customer himself; all steps can be defined in a dialogue window that will create the job ticket for each print job.

The Conclusion

Sand concludes "The growth in demand for these type of automated print solutions is very encouraging. More and more of our customers discover that an automated workflow will save on manual labor, while they are able to make money on the applications they offer to their customers. For us, the automated printing ability in PrintShop Mail combined with our expertise to incorporate this into customized solutions, allows us to earn good money on these projects. It is a true Win-Win situation."