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PRESS FOR SUCCESS

Meeting the In-Plant Print Job Submission Challenge



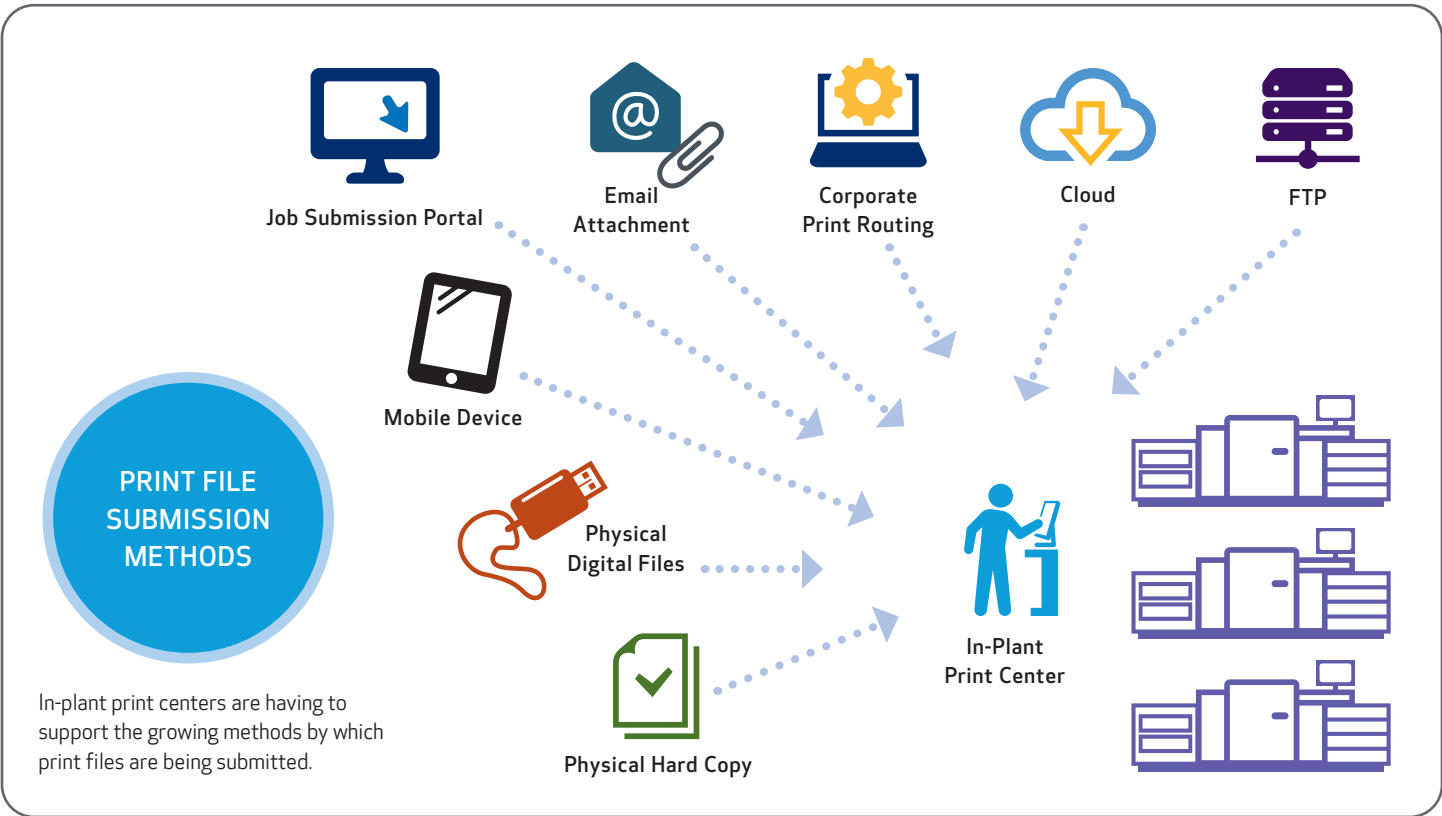
BREAKING THE JOB SUBMISSION TRAFFIC JAM

Sending an email is often viewed as a fast, easy way to communicate. Attaching a file is seen as a quick and convenient way to convey something of greater substance, such as a document or image. But using email to send print files to the in-plant printing facility or Corporate Reprographics Department (CRD) of an organization is far from efficient. In fact, it can sometimes create more problems than it solves.

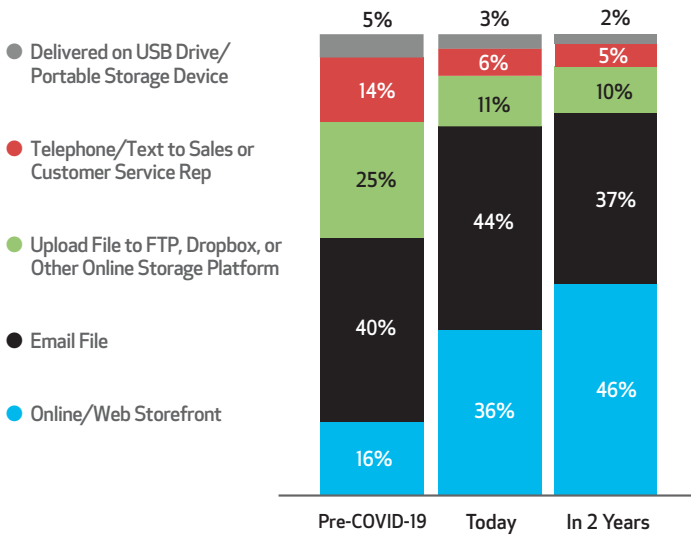
Despite their limitations, email, mail, and physical delivery are the most common methods used for submitting print jobs in in-plant environments. However, Web-to-print and client portals are the preferred solution, as they're more streamlined and efficient.

In many organizations, the Print Center resources are often stretched thin on physical space, equipment, and personnel. Managers learn to do more with less, and they're seeking ways to meet tighter print deadlines, streamline workflows, increase throughput, and reduce overtime spending. For most managers, it's about resource optimization, though sometimes at the expense of service levels and efficiency.





IN-PLANT JOB SUBMISSION THE TOP CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY



Q. What is the breakdown of how digital print jobs are submitted to your operation pre-COVID-19, today, and what do you expect in two years?
N = 80 In-Plants

Source: Enhancing The Print Customer Connection, NAPCO Research 2021

Against this backdrop, the job mix has evolved to become a series of short runs on short deadlines, printed on various substrates, and sometimes including variable data content. Marketing materials make up an important print job category that must be kept current to avoid becoming obsolete and losing effectiveness. It's a constant challenge for in-plants to keep pace with the workload and maintain a smooth-running operation, while minimizing waste and containing costs.

Most jobs still arrive at a typical in-plant through email (and some still on CD/DVD, USB thumb drive, or even by hand). The Print Center staff must then manually log each job in and queue them for preflighting and production. It's exceedingly slow, can lead to errors, and wastes time and money.

A great way for an in-plant to improve efficiency and performance as well as build customer satisfaction is to streamline the job submission and communication processes. Job submission solutions help to optimize the interaction between customers and print centers and help drive increased print volumes.

BUSINESS IMPACTS AT EVERY LEVEL



With any high-volume production process, the devil is in the details. For Print Centers, the challenge is to streamline job submission in order to automate time-consuming tasks. When print jobs are submitted manually via email or physical media, many unnecessary steps are added to the workflow.

LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT JUST HOW INEFFICIENT EMAIL JOB SUBMISSION REALLY IS.

From the **print customer's** standpoint, he or she must:

- Locate and attach a print file to an email
- Write an email message explaining printing and finishing requirements
- Submit the email to the Print Center requesting a quote
- Await a response (which could take days)
- Receive and accept (or question) the quote
- Approve the quote
- Approve the proof
- Wait for the completed print job
- Numerous follow up emails and/or phone calls to track order status

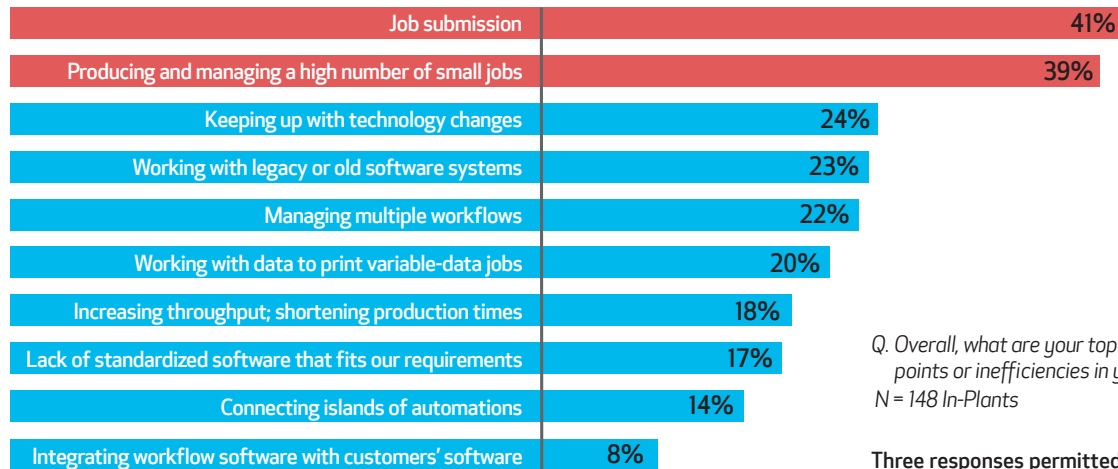
From the **In-Plant Print Center** standpoint, he or she must:

- Receive an email requesting a quote
- Call or email customer back with questions
- Create a quote and send to customer
- Create a Job Ticket
- Provide a proof
- Call or email customer for approval on the proof
- Match approved print job to proof given to customer
- Provide customer with updates on job status throughout process

The process of accurately capturing instructions via email and converting that data into a functional job ticket requires multiple steps and people, which may increase the margin of error.

The email may contain several attachments, missing files, or unclear requirements. There can be many versions of a print file or improper file formats. The email may not be immediately opened and read, and there's no confirmation of receipt. The result can have unforeseen errors, delays, and loss of customer loyalty.

TOP IN-PLANT WORKFLOW CHALLENGES



Q. Overall, what are your top three biggest pain points or inefficiencies in your current workflow?
N = 148 In-Plants

Three responses permitted.

Source: Digital Printing 5.0 NAPCO Research 2019

HURTING COMPETITIVENESS AND THE BOTTOM LINE

An organization suffers in other ways when its Print Center is unable to smoothly handle or keep up with its customers' demands. Inefficient document production creates supply chain and inventory management issues. Wasted time, resources, and materials hurt the company's bottom line and ultimately impact the viability of the Print Center, which may result in internal business going elsewhere.

JOB SUBMISSION COMPARISON

Web-to-Print Feature	Web-to-Print*	Email	FTP
Browser-Based File Submission	YES	NO	NO
Templated Storefront Setup	YES	NO	NO
PDF Print Driver File Submission	YES	NO	NO
Job Preview Prior To Submission	YES	NO	NO
Approval Workflows	YES	NO	NO
Submitter Job Tracking	YES	NO	NO
Production Dashboard	YES	NO	NO
Customizable Job Ticket	YES	NO	NO
Job Accounting	YES	NO	NO
Integrated VDP	YES	NO	NO
Auto PDF Conversion	YES	NO	NO
Notification Throughout Production Process	YES	NO	NO
Customizable Log-in Page	YES	NO	NO

* Not all Web-to-Print solutions may offer these specific capabilities.

STREAMLINE THE WORKFLOW AND INCREASE CUSTOMER CONVENIENCE

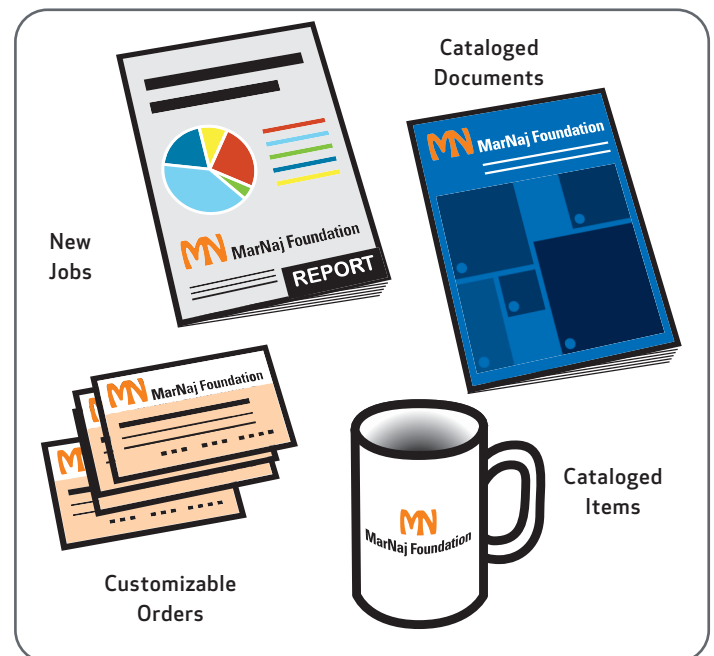


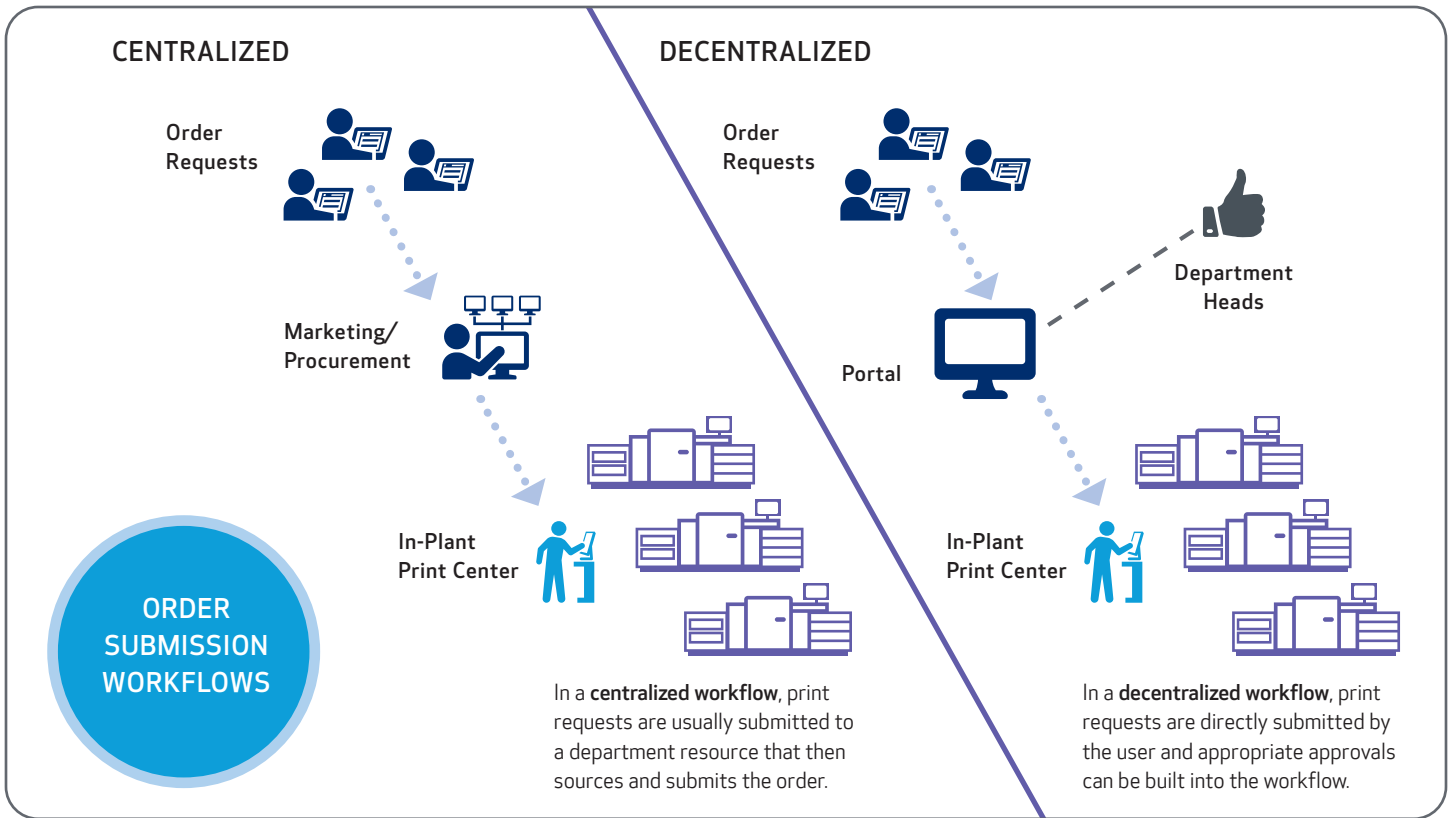
The solution for optimizing In-plant job submission lies in a successful approach within a streamlined, more automated workflow. A Web-based job submission solution provides a more efficient process for the accepting, communicating, and processing of print orders.

THE ADVANTAGES OF AUTOMATING JOB SUBMISSION

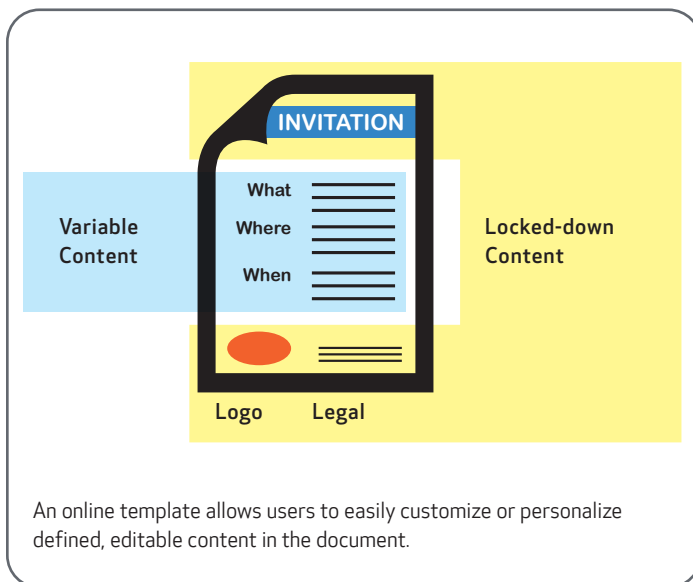
- Makes the process more convenient for customers and drives orders
- Enables access to a wider group of internal customers (e.g., sales, remote users)
- Helps reduce errors/delays due to miscommunication
- Improves turnaround on print quotes, customer approvals, and job delivery
- Provides financial controls for more accurate accounting
- Allows better control of corporate branding through templates
- Pre-flights jobs during submission and allows for identifying problems before production
- Integrates order information into business platforms (i.e., IT systems)
- Streamlines production processes
- Drives faster “go-to-market” push for new sales campaigns
- Helps reduce manual intervention

Online catalogs can be set up with defined print materials and cataloged items from which sales and other departments can order. These can be printed on demand in the latest version or fulfilled from inventory. The catalog could also include template-based pieces like business cards, invitations, or simple variable data applications that can be easily customized and ordered, as well as non-print products, such as branded items. More broadly, if a company has field offices, divisions, plants, dealers, or salespeople, they can also place online orders for location-specific materials.





Another benefit to using customized templates within an online catalog could be termed “controlled flexibility.” The template setup controls which content elements can be remotely changed while ensuring that branding, layout, and legal copy aren’t altered or removed.



REAL BENEFITS FOR CUSTOMERS

For the job submitter (customer), an automated process offers these benefits:

- Helps reduce turnaround time, making just-in-time delivery possible
- Faster feedback on print jobs
- Easier ordering and tracking
- Quicker time to market and improved competitiveness
- Enhanced communication and the building of confidence
- A more efficient supply chain
- Proofing
- Easier reordering/reprinting
- Control of brand use via online templates

Ultimately, simplifying the job submission process can result in improved productivity, efficient workflows, managed costs, and greater customer satisfaction and loyalty.

BUILDING AN EFFICIENT PRINT CENTER

At the operational level, job submission automation means an In-plant manager can rely on a single overview of all jobs received and will be alerted when new orders arrive. PDF print files can be merged and viewed for added efficiency. Plus, managers can store and reuse job ticket settings and leverage automation templates to streamline production of common job types.



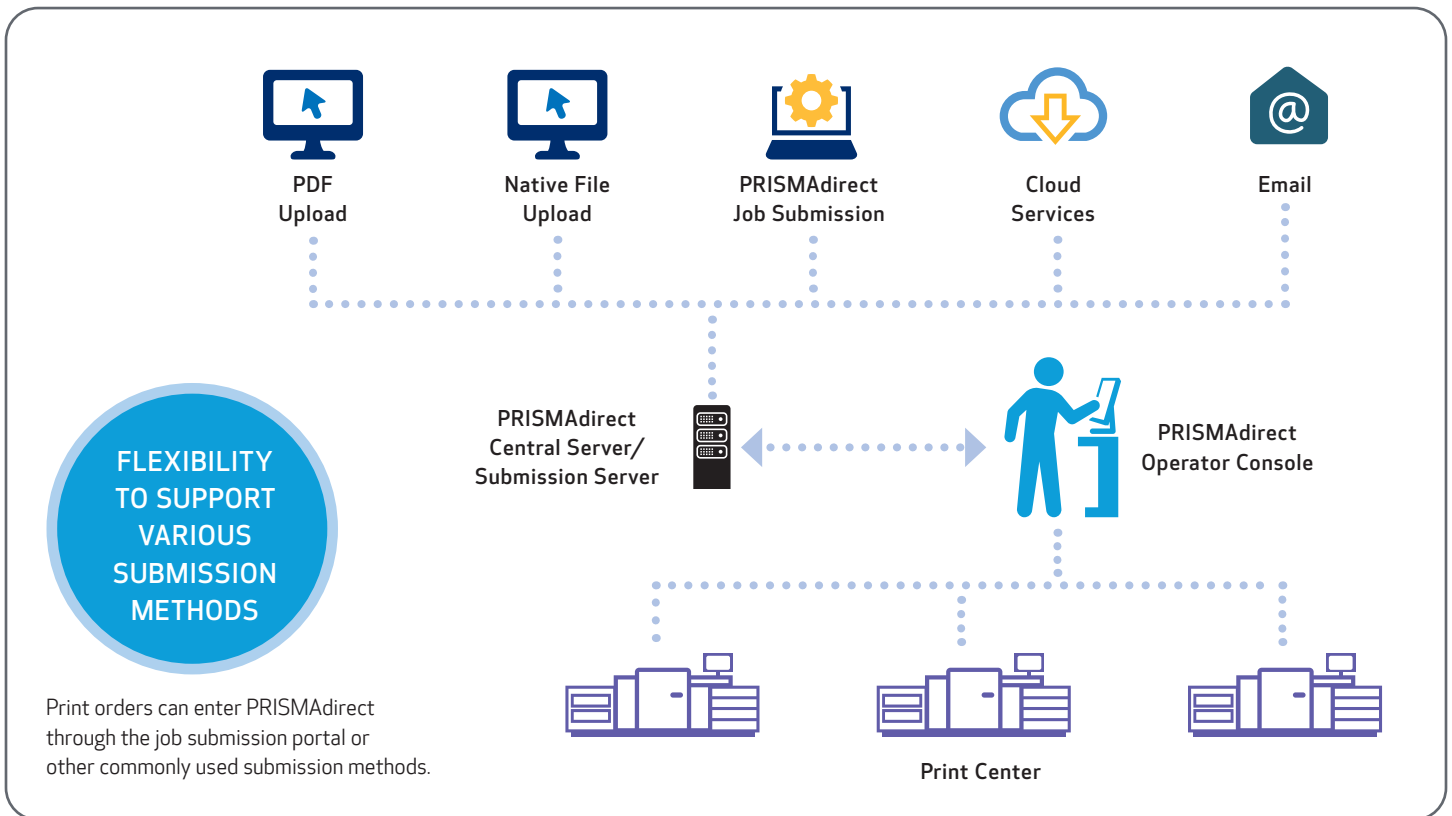
RECOMMENDED STEPS TO TAKE TO IMPLEMENT A JOB SUBMISSION SOLUTION

- Assess needs (current and future)
- Identify target customers
- Assess print applications to be supported at start-up
- Identify possible solution options that will meet your needs
- Discuss possible solution options with IT—security, internally hosted, cloud-based
- Identify how/where to pilot solution
- Develop an implementation plan

Integrated job submission and workflow management systems, like Canon's PRISMAdirect and PRISMAprepare, help simplify document make-ready, from composition through production. Many job options can be automated, and on-screen previewing helps eliminate the need for hard-copy proofs.

These include:

- Booklets
- Imposition layouts
- Full-bleed tabs
- Color splitting of documents
- Variable data documents



Your customers will receive personalized emails that include links to the job preview, requirements, and associated elements. You'll enjoy greater control over production while letting customers maintain ownership of their jobs.

FAST AND FLEXIBLE

Job submission and workflow management solutions, such as PRISMAdirect, offer a flexible and scalable way to handle incoming orders. Even when customers insist on using "legacy" job submission methods such as email, processing is still relatively quick and easy. If necessary, incoming files can be automatically converted to PDFs and directed to any available production printers on the network.

For Print Centers, a Web-to-print solution provides these benefits:

- Helps attract and retain customers
- Supports flexible order handling and preflighting of PDFs

- Builds customer confidence with order tracking and reporting
- Monitors and helps controls print costs
- Helps increase production efficiency and reduces waste
- Improves project management and communication
- Expands capabilities and attracts new business

According to a recent Enhancing The Print Customer Connection study, the total print volume produced by In-Plants through Web-to-print and job submission portals is projected to increase by 25% over the next two years.** This rapid growth is a clear indicator that Web-to-print is the most efficient way to introduce print jobs to the workflow and maintain a productive communications channel between customers and print providers.

** Source: Enhancing The Print Customer Connection, NAPCO Research 2021

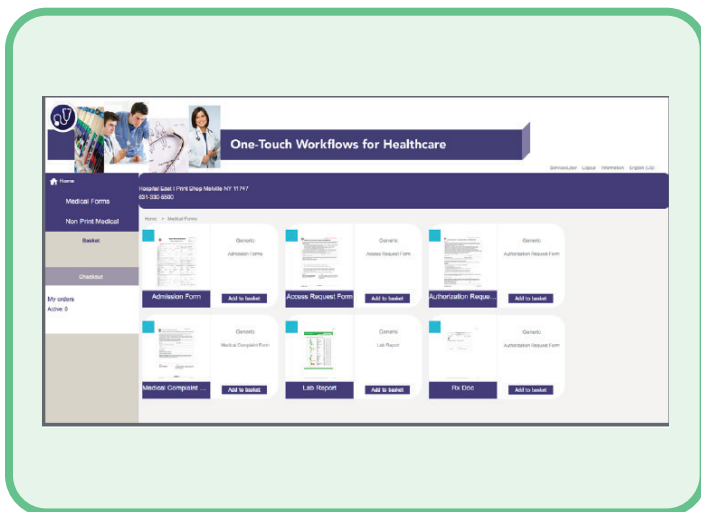
SOFTWARE IS KEY

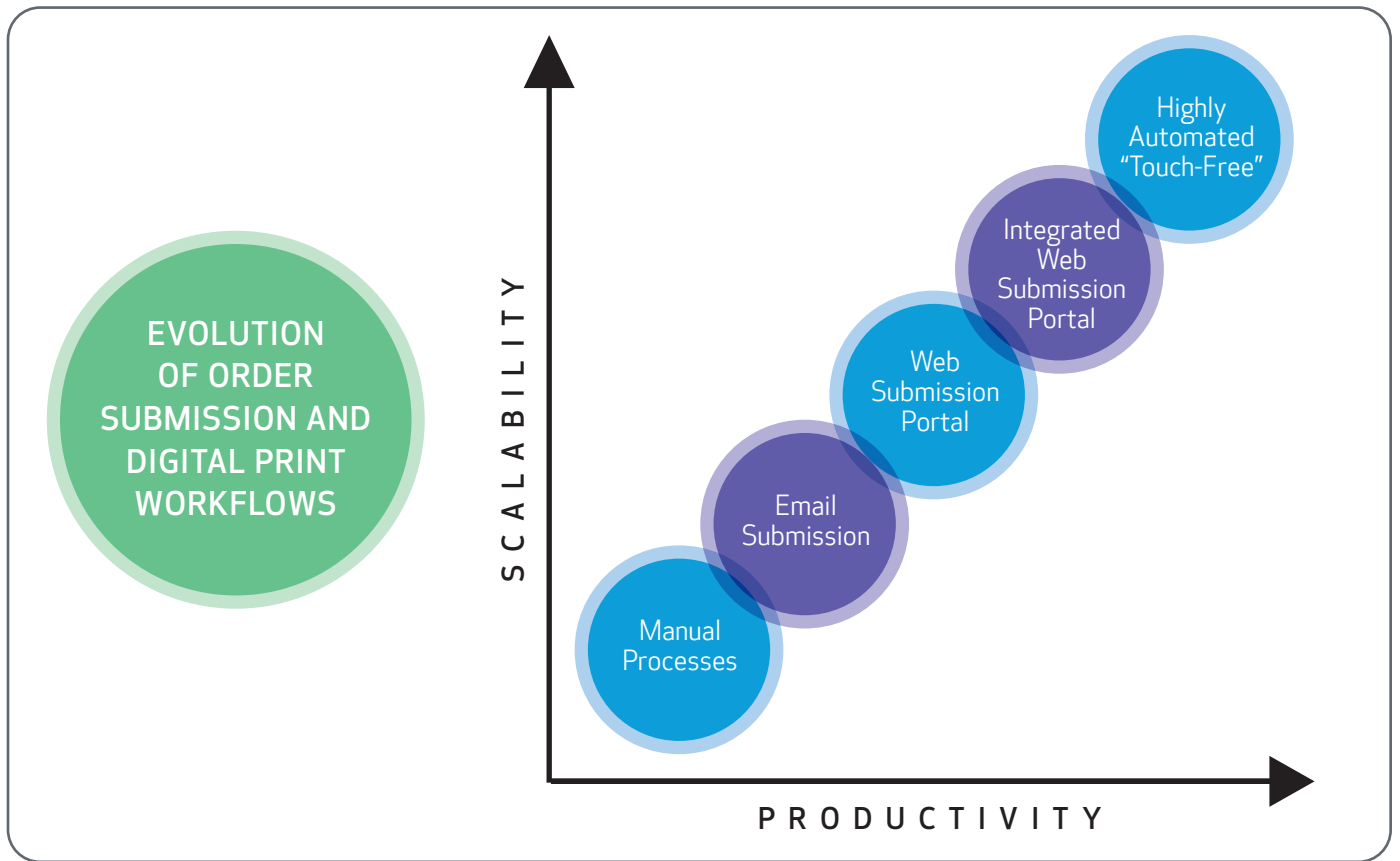


While hardware may be the most visible part of the printing process, the software behind the scenes is critical. From the moment an order is placed, job submission and workflow management software brings a degree of speed, flexibility, and sophistication to the process that was missing without it.

SOLVING BUSINESS PROBLEMS WITH PRISMAdirect

PRISMAdirect software is an easy-to-use, structured job submission tool. It offers various ways to submit jobs to the In-plant Print Center, such as through a Web storefront, a downloadable driver, or an email. Customers can request a range of job communications that they'd like to receive, including cost estimates, quotations, delivery information, and email notifications. They can request PDF proofs for review and approval before jobs go into production. There are also tools and settings for workflow authorization (e.g., preventing customers from exceeding approved budgets), print job volume limits, and restrictions on ordering materials that aren't required.





TURN YOUR PRINT CENTER INTO A PRINT ORDER MAGNET

Once you've implemented a job submission automation system, your In-plant print shop can become a magnet for print orders. With the right tools in place, you can easily handle tighter deadlines, shorter runs, and more complex job requirements while improving productivity and maintaining a close watch on costs and labor. Your customers will be able to submit jobs as easily and efficiently as they do when sending files to their desktop printer.

CONCLUSION

Establishing an automated and secure Web-enabled entry point to your In-plant Print Center workflow lets you transform your business from being a commodity supplier to a solutions provider. Streamlined job submission enables smooth and accurate file transfer, tracking, collaboration, proofing, and delivery, along with a host of business-level benefits, like increased efficiency, improved cost control, and greater competitiveness.

Functionally, such job submission can be distributed rather than centralized, extending the efficiency benefits of 24/7 access and flexible, just-in-time ordering to remote offices and people.

Even better, with user-friendly job submission you'll build strong customer loyalty and an enhanced service reputation as you create new revenue streams for the business. It won't be long before you wonder how your department ever did without it.

For more information,
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