

This year's PEAK Award winners went the extra mile to achieve goals and solve challenges. Check out the impressive planning, creativity and collaboration that went into these projects.

In some people's minds, your industry is just ink on paper. Those people have never judged or viewed the Print Excellence and Knowledge (PEAK) Awards.

The next several pages are filled with achievements and advancements, a wide range of missions and milestones. You'll see a textured brochure placed into a bottle. A mural on glass that helped a hotel advertise during construction. A rebranded magazine with an eye-opening history book. An electronic billing technology that enabled faster payments. A mailer that matched a cool event theme and helped to boost attendance.

That's not even half of the winners. This year's PEAK Awards are a testament to hard work and teamwork. They spotlight an industry that knows how to roll up its sleeves, and then roll out products, programs and services that literally mean business. Distributors and manufacturers are turning

"solution" from a buzzword to a business reality, with discussions, plans and actions that make a tangible difference to clients.

Since 1995, the PEAK Awards have served as an annual way to congratulate companies that care deeply about the industry's impact on end users. Held in partnership with the Print Education & Research Foundation (PERF), PEAK recognizes your success, awarding teams that make bold decisions, infuse projects with energy and ideas, and innovate to help their clients accelerate.

This year, judges used the following criteria to choose winners:

- Level of innovation
- Suitability based on the client's intent
- Strategic significance
- Distinction from similar products in the category.
- Results or projected results

PSDA congratulates all the PEAK Award winners, and also the industry at-large. You're establishing closer trust with clients, resulting in deeper conversations and connections. Here's a giant fist-bump to everyone who entered.

What follows are testimonials from the winners, explaining challenges and solutions in their own words. Enjoy flipping through these pages.

## PEAK BASICS

PSDA's annual Print Excellence and Knowledge (PEAK) Awards highlight unique and successful print and marketing services applications. The association hosts this annual competition to honor the work of print professionals who have met their customers' needs by providing outstanding value-added products and services through creativity in design, production, fulfillment and other services, while solving problems or improving business functions.

At the beginning of 2018, PSDA began calling for entries in various ways, including in *PS Magazine*, in the association's e-newsletter and online at www.psda.org/peakawards. Submissions closed Aug. 30, and judging took place Oct. 12. at PSDA Headquarters in Chicago.

## 'WE'RE HERE TO TAKE CARE OF THE HARD PART'

WINNER: THE SOLV GROUP
PROJECT: CUSTOMER APPRECIATION GIFT BOX

#### THE CHALLENGE

SOLV was looking for a way to communicate its brand values in a standout way by making customers feel not just appreciated, but celebrated.

As a salesperson, it is challenging to bring a new customer on board. You really have to work at it. Sometimes it takes you seven to 10 meetings, emails, conversations, and quoting back and forth. When you finally get the job, you produce it, and then what? If you do nothing else with it, you're just an order taker. You blend in with a sea of other service providers. And since SOLV's purpose is to help employees and customers win through excellence, opportunity and service, we need to demonstrate that. We're not really being excellent if we just say "thank you" and leave it at that. Customer acquisition and retention are an ongoing challenge for every company, and we wanted to do something that really shows our customers how much we value them.

#### THE SOLUTION

We decided we needed to do something far above and beyond a thank-you letter. Something that felt like an event like Christmas or a birthday — a gift package that created anticipation and excitement.

We partnered with Wright's packaging division to produce a custom box with a custom packaging insert. The box itself is designed to stand out — a large, striking black box in an atypical elongated rectangle shape, topped with our logo in red. The custom packaging insert holds an oversized coffee mug, a sticky notebook, a pen, a few mints or candies, and a coaster.

We then developed a printed letter insert that can be customized on the fly. We had copy written for a "Welcome to the team" letter for new customers. The messaging is consistent with our informal, helpful brand vibe. Like the message on the coaster inside, the letter is meant to give our customers a smile and let them know we're here to help them relax. We're here to take care of the hard part.

Our entire design and in-house print team collaborated on the letter insert, coming up with a beautiful design and a

## The letter is meant to give our customers a smile and let them know we're here to help them relax.

creative cut-out that allows the mug to pop through. We also made striking use of our new ability to print with clear toner, which gives us the ability to create effects similar to spot varnish in an economical way. The process involved numerous rounds of prototyping in order to really take advantage of our creative and print capabilities, maximizing the effectiveness of the piece.

In addition, since the packaging insert is removable, the box can be repurposed in other ways: events, larger holiday gifts, employee welcome boxes, trade shows and vendor gifts. It opens up tremendous flexibility in different ways we can show appreciation.

#### THE RESULT

The whole piece showcases who we are and what we can do for our customers in a way that's designed to bring some joy to their day. It turned out to be one of the nicest pieces we've done. It's really different from what most people do.

We think we'll be remembered for doing something different, and for not taking our customers for granted. They can buy from anyone, but if we can say thank you in a tangible way that makes them happy, we're more likely to have the opportunity to help them again. And by showing them something special, we're opening up the possibility we may be able to provide them with something similar they can do for their own customers. But ultimately, it's about them feeling appreciated and us having the chance to live out our values by making their day.



## TREASURING YOUR CUSTOMERS

**WINNER: SAFEGUARD BY PRIME PROJECT: MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE** 

#### THE CHALLENGE

Many existing customers turned to Safeguard for a specific product or service the company offered but didn't recognize the larger suite of solutions Safeguard could provide. Safeguard wanted to come up with a marketing piece that demonstrated the breadth of products it offers in a creative way so it could better serve customers.

#### THE SOLUTION

One Safeguard supplier was offering a good deal on dense, plastic bottles with a cork top. My first thought when I saw it was that it looked like a message in a bottle. I wanted to come up with a creative way to use it in our marketing promotion. The corporate team at Safeguard had a vertical market sales sheet available to distributors that I knew I could adapt to talk solely about the products and services my distributorship offers, reformatting it to look like a treasure map.

We created a textured, 11"x7" brochure that walks the customer through the various sales and marketing tools that we offer, ultimately leading to the "treasure" at the end of the map, which is the customer's success. The stops along the way use kitschy pirate jargon, and the "map key" talks about the support our distributorship provides to customers throughout their journey. We rolled those up, tied them with a piece of twine, put the cork top back on the bottle and shipped them out to customers.

#### THE RESULT

Customers love the layout of the design because it's easy to follow and far more unique than most of the marketing materials they've received. Our pipeline has started filling up for the remainder of the summer, a time that is traditionally slower for print distributors. We've been spending our days connecting existing distributors with new offers. It's proven to be a great tool for customers that didn't initially buy a lot of products from us.





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## **NOT YOUR AVERAGE BOX**

**WINNER: MERIDIAN** 

PROJECT: TIC GUMS / YETI MAILER

#### THE CHALLENGE

The customer, a chewing gum manufacturer, wanted a mailer invite that delivered a high-end gift and looked like a crate to go with a dinosaur/explorer theme because their event was in a museum. The event was exclusive and formal, held during a trade show at McCormick Place in Chicago. The invite had to match the formal tone of the event, and entice recipients to attend.

#### THE SOLUTION

We recommended a custom-branded YETI tumbler within a custom-printed shipping box. We had to design a box that fit tight around the mug but still functioned as a mailer. We had to not only design the box layout, but also work in conjunction

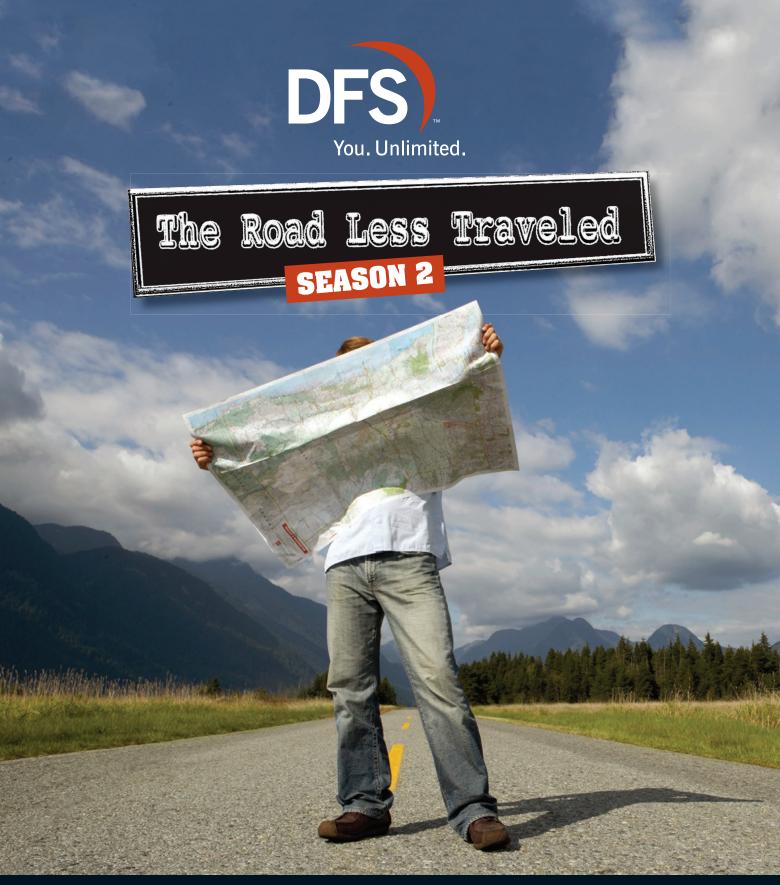
with the post office to make sure everything was working properly and would mail in accordance with USPS shipping parameters for size, carton and weight.

Once the prototyping stage was approved, we provided a design template to the client's ad agency to apply the graphics to be printed. After finishing the design, we had to add "filler" to provide padding around the tumbler and to avoid both damage and the potential of the boxes opening before the invite/mailer arrived. Each box was carefully kitted, packed and fulfilled by our shipping department to ensure all packages were secure.

#### THE RESULT

Not only did the clients get a nice gift, but the box created a response more than expected for turnout to their event.





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## 'A PROFITABLE TOUCH'

WINNER: WESTERN STATES ENVELOPE & LABEL
PROJECT: TOUCH, FEEL, FLOURISH, 2018 CALENDAR ENVELOPE

#### THE CHALLENGE

Western States Envelope & Label is positioned as a marketing partner that can help customers integrate traditional print and mail with emerging technologies. For example, we have several interactive envelope products that help distributors boost open rates and work in tandem with direct mail, so recipients get a more immediate, personalized experience. New ideas and directions happen rapidly in our industry, and we wanted to position ourselves as an agile partner that is able to support the changing marketplace.

#### THE SOLUTION

We designed a calendar envelope that features "A Profitable Touch" explaining the science of touch or haptics and how incorporating sensory-pleasing paper stock/coating is a formidable force in building brand awareness and sales success. We worked with Burton & Mayer to produce flat sheets that would be converted into envelopes. This envelope is printed four-color process with satin aqueous and spot gloss raised UV on 100# Sterling Ultra C1S. The water droplets, braille and blue text had spot gloss raised UV to feature the "touch" element.

#### THE RESULT

We received very positive feedback on the outcome of this envelope and even heard from one of its reps that it was the best calendar envelope created yet. The main objective with this piece was to educate our customers on incorporating sensory-pleasing paper stock/coating in their projects to increase customer engagement.





## **CRAFTILY CONCEALING CONSTRUCTION**

**WINNER: MERIDIAN** 

PROJECT: ST. JANE HOTEL GRAND OPENING BUILDING GRAPHICS

#### THE CHALLENGE

With the grand opening of the new St. Jane Hotel still a few months away, hotel management needed to find a way to continue construction on the inside while giving people passing by on the outside a glimpse of what was to come. This

"advertisement" of sorts also doubled as a way to keep people from seeing all the construction mess and passing judgement before the doors were even open. The graphics were as much a decor piece as an advertisement for the new hotel as they crafted a mood.

#### THE SOLUTION

Partnering with our local wide-format vendor, local installer and ad agency, we arranged several conference calls to discuss the window graphics and how we would produce them. The ground floor was installed on the outside of the windows while the second and third floor were installed on the inside. Utilizing white ink technology and clear window vinyls, we were able to allow the sunlight in by day and interior lighting to shine out on to Michigan Avenue by night. We were also asked to print and install a barricade banner in front of the soon-to-be entrance of the St. Jane Hotel. With the words "Opening Soon" placed front and center, it tied in with the clean lines of the landmark building. We fought typical Midwest spring weather, including 35-degree temps, sleet and snow on our first day of install. With a break in the weather, we hit our customers' deadline, and everything was finished before their photo shoot and on-site visit from the hotel group management board.

#### THE RESULT

The result was a beautiful mural on glass that accentuated an already iconic building. The window treatments were up for two solid months during spring as well as early summer traffic. Overall, the project achieved both of its primary goals: to create a taste of what was yet to come and shield the outside from the construction going on in the inside.





## **MAKING IT EASY TO BE ON TIME**

**WINNER: MPX** 

PROJECT: SECURE ELECTRONIC BILLING SOLUTION

#### THE CHALLENGE

WEX, a global provider of payment processing and information management services in the commercial and government vehicle fleet industry, sends customer monthly invoices and vehicle activity reports to clients. A subset of their clients was habitually paying late. Customers were surveyed and reported that late payment was often due to receiving an invoice too close to the due date. Forty-six percent of respondents reported that they would use a portal to view invoices and reports if offered.

It was determined that once the billing cycle ended, it was taking as many as 11 days for customers to receive their invoices. More than half of this time was utilized for mailing and transit time. WEX's objective was to continue mailing invoices and reports but to also present an electronic bill and report to customers within two days of the billing cycle close.

#### THE SOLUTION

While the idea of electronic billing is nothing new, WEX was looking for a unique solution to allow customers to view documents without requiring customers to create and manage a user profile on an online portal. The goal was to provide the electronic document to the customer at the soonest possible time securely and conveniently.

Therefore, MPX designed a solution that would securely store documents online and notify customers via email that the document is ready for viewing. This required that the customer receive an email with a hyperlink to access a temporary document viewing confirmation page. The confirmation page then prompts the customer to enter their email address to verify identity. The user then receives another email that contains the online access to their billing document.

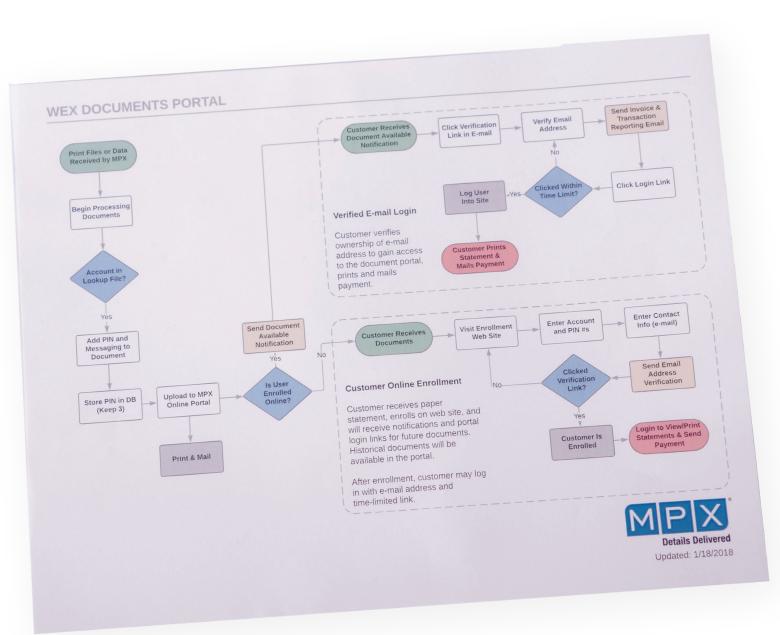
Additional security measures were put in place to only allow temporary access to the document, essentially expiring the link to the document after 15 minutes. This allows the customers to receive and view their document, download it and delete the email without having to manage portal credentials.

#### THE RESULT

This solution provided WEX customers the option to view bills and vehicle activity reports within two days of the billing cycle close and thus eliminated the reported barrier to paying on time. Receiving the bill 81 percent faster enabled these customers to pay more quickly, thus improving cash flow for WEX and providing an added convenience to customers in a unique way.

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## **ON THE FLIP SIDE**

# WINNER: POWERONE PRINT & MARKETING PROJECT: ESP LAYERED BROCHURE

#### THE CHALLENGE

A brochure is a great way to communicate key messages to an audience, but conventional ones (bifold and trifold brochures) can be limiting in size and scope. Our customer needed a marketing piece that could communicate a multitude of information, especially new features of its benchmark software system. The brochure's design needed to accomplish that goal, as well as appear unique and somewhat interactive.

#### THE SOLUTION

PowerOne Print & Marketing collaborated with Astro-Dynamic Print & Graphic Services, a printer in Warminster, Pennsylvania, that offers offset and digital printing, mailing services, graphic design, augmented reality and more.

The Astro-Dynamic team produced the brochure as a layered, accordion-style flip booklet on an offset six-color press with full bleed. An accordion fold is one in which each fold runs in the opposite direction to the previous fold, creating a pleated effect. The recipient can "play" with the piece as he or she flips through content presented in this manner, and can stop and digest pertinent information. Computer-aided design was the key to optimizing form and function. Precise measurements for each flip-tab had to be determined so they would work in unison with each other and with the pull-tab mechanism. The sheets were then die-cut, scored and perfed. They were hand assembled and glued to maintain shape. They were mailed to recipients in a sealed envelope.

#### THE RESULT

The client really liked the 3-D effect of the flip book, and thought the piece was interactive and fun. More importantly, it enticed the recipients to participate, drawing them closer to the information presented in the piece. The client was able to include a variety of content in an organized, unique way.





## **BUILDING ON A FOUNDATION**

**WINNER: RBO PRINTLOGISTIX** 

PROJECT: ADSC FOUNDATION DRILLING MAGAZINE REBRAND

#### THE CHALLENGE

The International Association of Foundation Drilling (ADSC-IAFD) has published its trade magazine *Foundation Drilling* for several years. ADSC is a professional trade association that serves the foundation engineering and construction industry. It publishes a 120+ page magazine eight times per year with over 10,000 domestic and international readers.

In 2017, the organization felt the time was right to rebrand all marketing collateral and promotional products. Along with needing a brand that was updated, it also desperately needed a marketing partner to help with *Foundation Drilling* magazine's production, design and print. It also needed to create several marketing collateral pieces to compliment a re-design. The organization's small staff was at workload capacity and did not have the time to allocate toward their overall marketing and branding efforts.

#### THE SOLUTION

RBO Printlogistix provided ADSC multiple cover and inside page design possibilities for the magazine. Elated by the options and direction RBO provided, ADSC ultimately chose a design they felt modernized the magazine and reflected the association appropriately. *Foundation Drilling* magazine now has a contemporary look without losing appeal to its older demographic of readers. Not only was this achieved with design and layout, but production finishes were also applied to the cover (like spot gloss and soft touch) to give the magazine a modern look and feel.

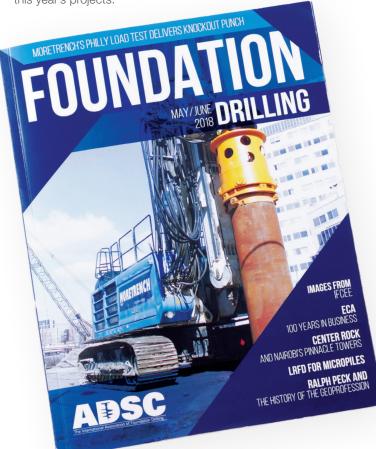
In addition to the new look, ADSC benefited from over 10 years of publication production and management available on the RBO staff. They were able to make tweaks in the production process by building the pagination (editorial and ad placement map) at the beginning of an issue cycle rather than the end. This greatly alleviated massive changes in the late stages of production, which can be more prone to mistakes and expensive.

RBO, in conjunction with the regular magazine work, created several marketing collateral pieces for ADSC that really harmonized with the rebranding. The most notable pieces are the marketing brochure and the history book. The marketing brochure stands out with dimensional UV and foil (a fairly new post-press technique). The history book was the first of its kind to give a backstory of ADSC and the foundation drilling industry. RBO designed the 144-page book in a monochromatic design scheme that combined both a contemporary and rustic look.

#### THE RESULT

Not only was there great satisfaction in the design of the final product of the magazine, but RBO PrintLogistix has effectively taken a huge role in the everyday production of *Foundation Drilling*. As an integral planning and production partner alongside the ADSC staff, RBO has been able to assume most of the responsibility that comes with producing this publication and its related collateral. This has been a huge relief to ADSC, helping the association focus on the needs of its industry. This process streamlined production, saving ADSC time and money. It has helped keep production on schedule. As a sign of a successful product, subscriptions to the magazine have increased for the year, as well.

The new marketing collateral was all rolled out at the industry's biggest conference, IFCEE, and was a huge hit. All attendees received a copy of the history book, and it is currently for sale on ADSC's website. ADSC's prospects and current members at IFCEE loved the marketing brochure and brand-new look. ADSC and RBO have joined together in an extremely successful long-term partnership because of the success of this year's projects.





## **LAYING THE GROUNDWORK**

**WINNER: RBO PRINTLOGISTIX** 

PROJECT: GROUNDWORK MORTGAGE PRINT AND PROMO STRATEGY

#### THE CHALLENGE

In 2018, Groundwork Mortgage became its own company after spinning off from McBride Homes, a longtime partner with RBO PrintLogistix. Now that Groundwork was its own entity, it needed to execute its brand to establish its presence in the mortgage industry.

#### THE SOLUTION

A strategy of print and event marketing was determined, so RBO started developing materials using in-house talent and intelligent sourcing with its preferred vendor network.

Expertly designed handouts were created for distribution at display homes, events and real estate happenings. A variety of large format solutions were created for golfing events (hole signage), builder shows (pop-up banners) and various other promotional events (sail banners). Unique promotional products were also leveraged to great success. A great example is the development of branded items such as ice buckets, foldout chairs, ring toss games and apparel for tailgating events.

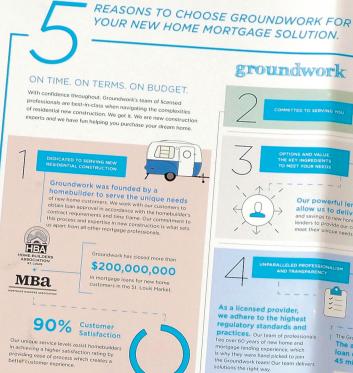
#### THE RESULT

Groundwork Mortgage has been extremely pleased with RBO PrintLogistix's ability to provide a wide breadth of print and promotional marketing solutions, all under one roof. "We consider RBO to be a trusted partner and would recommend them to anyone. Their responsiveness and service level are the best in the biz," said Joseph M. Schiermann II, vice president at Groundwork Mortgage.



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## **NO MISTAKES ALLOWED**

WINNER: TAIYODO PRINTING INC.
PROJECT: SPECIAL COLLECTION TAX STATEMENT

#### THE CHALLENGE

Each year, "special collection tax statement" is forwarded by every city in Japan to its residents via their employer. The statement package is encapsulated and sealed by the municipalities all over the country. The number, paper size, and thickness of the statements and letters (including payment slips for the companies and personal statement for the individuals) varies. Matching these documents to create a package, which includes a greeting letter and a 24-page instruction booklet, is an extremely complex task.

Our company used to handle this task manually with 10 employees and some part-time employees over four days at the request from a local city in Chiba prefecture with a population of 90,000. Handling of personal information, such as annual salary income and other income recorded, was a sensitive task. No mistakes were allowed; if they were, they made the news and appeared in local newspapers.

Two years ago, we were approached from a city with a population size of 1 million to consign this annual tax statement enclosure and sealing operation. Until then, the city had 50 staff people to handle it manually over four days. The condition for our company to be consigned for this project was to make no mistakes. As long as we engage in manual work performed by people, there will be mistakes, so we came to conclusion of developing encapsulated sealing machines by introducing state-of-the-art robotic technology for this task.

#### THE SOLUTION

We nominated the Takada sales manager as the person responsible for this project and consulted with a domestic state-of-the-art encapsulating and sealing machine manufacturer for the realization of a service that responds to our customer's request. This manufacturer is a company with technology that can develop its own encapsulation seal. It took about two years to develop a mechanism to match papers of different shapes and quantity by combining our technology and the originally developed OCR number that can be read automatically through collaboration. In addition, we were able to acquire a government subsidy aimed at the development of innovative technologies, and were able to reduce our cost by about 50 percent. Testing this robot started last fall, and after adjustments and improved work, we successfully processed the actual enclosing service in May of 2018.

Furthermore, by using state-of-the-art Internet of Things (IoT) technology, we have created a function in which the customer can monitor the operation remotely through smartphones and tablets, by observing a secure livestream video. By adding the use of IoT to cater to diversifying customer requests, we can offer new services with confidence

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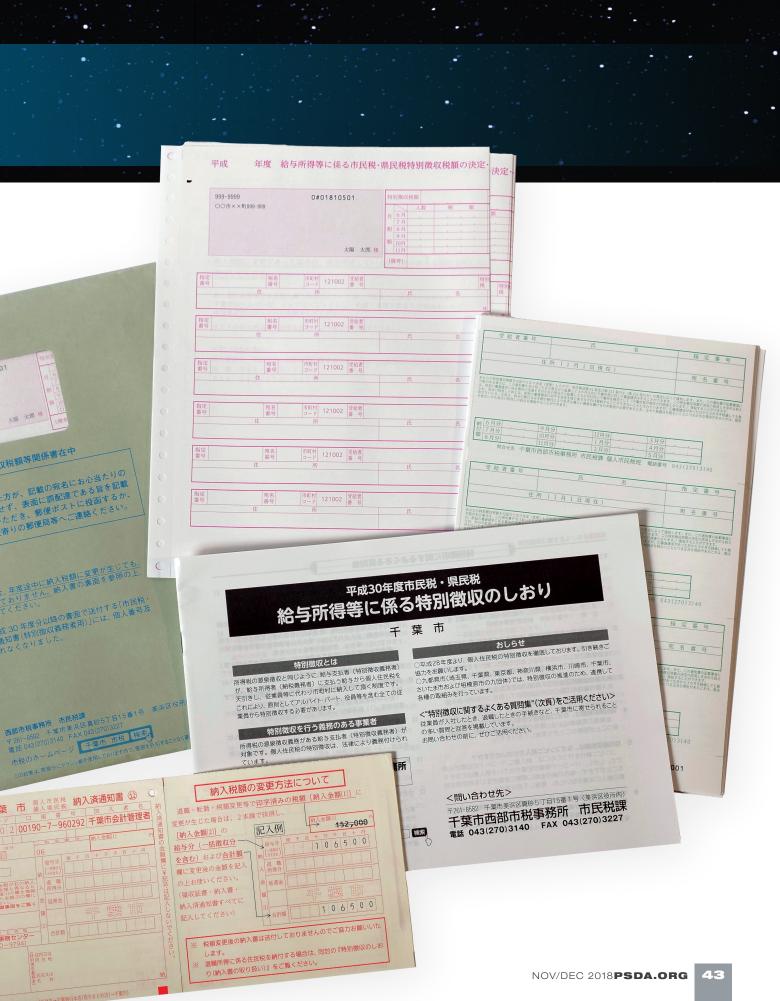
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that can be entrusted by our customers.

#### THE RESULT

By achieving 100 percent of our customer's request, we were able to earn maximum trust. We processed a total of 59,000 three-point matching, enclosing and sealing operations with different sizes, thicknesses and number of papers - free of mistakes. Moreover, we have created a mechanism in which the weight calculated from the matching information and the actual individual envelope weight is compared, so that correct matching can be checked by 1/100th of a gram. This information is saved as a log so the work precision can be proved.

We succeeded in significantly shortening the delivery date, too. By mechanizing the work that had been processed by 10 staff people in four days, we were able to process the same workload in four hours. We were able to secure profit, as well. While other companies still perform this task manually, our mechanization added great value in avoiding mistakes, so we are securing profit without competition. As other cities are also interested in the automation of this process, this technology is becoming a catalyst to increase our customers for next year.



# **'EVERYTHING THEY NEED AND NOTHING THEY DON'T'**

WINNER: E-BISGLOBAL PTY LTD
PROJECT: BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE SOFTWARE

#### THE CHALLENGE

E-Bisglobal Pty Ltd provides full print management, warehousing and distribution services for a number of major government agencies and corporate clients. These clients require accurate, real-time and readily accessible KPI reporting via a single, easy-to-use dashboard.

Until recently, our clients have had the ability to view multiple real-time reports online. These reports are generated by a range of operating systems we use in-house, including ERP (Demand Bridge), CRM (No Bells or Whistles®), a procurement software tool (ZOOL®) and IT (JIRA), to name just a few. As an example, we generate more than 30 reports weekly for one agency alone, and these reports must be manually updated and reviewed by dedicated account management staff on our team — a tedious, time-consuming exercise.

We also found that the traditionally generated reports only provided a set of pre-defined information, which can't be manipulated. The challenge was to come up with an innovative software solution that would provide reports to large government clients and major corporations with the following requirements/deliverables:

- Nimble, real-time reporting
- Cross-platform functionality, including mobile devices
- Simple to learn and use
- Cloud-based
- Secure, locked down and unable to be shared electronically, with access controlled by login and a feature that would restrict the level of information accessed by different users
- A more meaningful user experience, because of the ability to transform data into an outcome that helps them manage their business more effectively and efficiently

In terms of our in-house requirements, it was crucial that the software solution would enable reports to be easily customized for a range of clients with diverse KPI reporting needs. This would free up our resources to work on higher-value tasks and, in this way, not only save our company money, but also allow us to better serve the needs of our clients and take on new clients.

Furthermore, with the founder and executive chairman of our company currently planning his retirement and succession arrangements, the challenge was to ensure the software

solution would also provide him with a means of maintaining high - level, ongoing control of the company, accessible from anywhere (with internet service), 24/7.

So the challenge was threefold:

- To better serve the management reporting needs of our large print management clients
- 2. To improve our own in-house efficiencies in terms of report production and monitoring
- To provide a means for retiring print management company directors (or any retiring company director) to keep their finger on the pulse of their business and be able to make decisions based on relevant, real-time data from anywhere in the world

#### THE SOLUTION

We began by researching the market for a business intelligence reporting tool that we could customize in-house and that would sit above our existing procurement software system or any other data set. Most importantly, the tool had to satisfy the challenges identified by our large government clients as well as the challenges within our company.

The business intelligence tool we selected allows us to easily combine any data source, no matter how large, and create powerful, readily accessible and secure analytics. These analytics are seamlessly integrated into our clients' workflow and focused on their specific needs.

After purchasing the software, we employed a full-time business analyst/IT developer and trained him both internally and externally so he could tailor the software, firstly to our own internal needs, and then to our government clients' specifications.

We made the strategic decision to tailor the software for our internal needs first so we could run a trial of it in-house before offering it to our clients. Once we could see the demonstrated efficiencies delivered by the software in-house, we were ready to present our new offering to our government clients and ask them to provide us with a wish list in terms of reporting. Each client came to us with a very different wish list, which was handed to our business analyst, who cleansed the necessary data, reviewed their processes and built new customized online reporting suites using the application.

#### THE RESULT

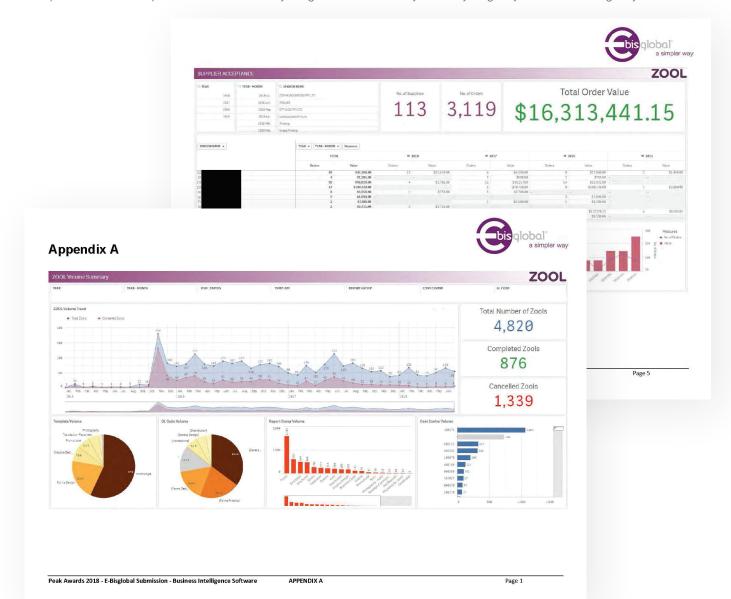
The benefits achieved by customizing the software have been immense, both for our company and for three of our largest

government clients so far. By creating personalized interactive visualizations and intelligently summarizing vast amounts of complex real-time data, we have enabled our clients to quickly find meaning in their reports and reveal actionable insights. And we have achieved the same result within our own company.

Our full-time developer and business analyst has been able to extend the software's functionality to build custom apps and visualizations for our clients with open and standard APIs. Complex data from multiple sources can be readily integrated

without the need for external tools. And every deployment can rapidly scale across geographical areas to support large volumes of data and users across the globe.

In summary, what we now offer is a breakthrough analytics platform that scales the power of insight from a single person to an entire enterprise. The innovative, next-generation reporting tool truly empowers an organization (including our own) and enables us to supply clients with the right information quickly and easily. It's everything they need and nothing they don't.



## **SPLIT KITS**

**WINNER: MPX** 

#### PROJECT: HUGE POSTAGE SAVINGS FOR COUNTYCARE

#### THE CHALLENGE

CountyCare is a no-cost, Medicaid managed-care health plan serving members in Cook County, Illinois. CountyCare is offered through the more than 130 health centers and hospitals included in the Cook County Health and Hospital System. It provides members with access to thousands of doctors and specialists, pharmacy services and prescriptions, dental and vision care, and transportation to medical appointments.

During open enrollment, CountyCare was printing and mailing welcome kits that included:

- Plan booklet
- Welcome letter and integrated print-on-demand identification card
- Postcard
- Privacy letter
- Primary care physician enrollment form
- Three other marketing pages

Integrating identification cards with welcome kits can provide benefits to both the health plan and the member. MPX often uses a letter-sized stock with die-cut identification cards, which is printed to include a welcome letter and two identification cards on a single sheet. These can be printed on-demand, duplex, using variable data and can be machine inserted. Ondemand printing offers greater flexibility to the payer as they negotiate plans with providers through the end of an enrollment period, which can affect card content at the last minute when mail dates are near. In-line printing and inserting integrated card sheets is also a faster and often more cost-effective method than traditional tipped on cards. For members, integrating identification cards with welcome kits provides a complete package and can reduce confusion and unnecessary in-bound phone calls related to having received a welcome kit without ID cards or vice versa.

In the case of CountyCare, we were working with a large welcome kit that contained many components. Due to the inclusion of identification cards, the package had to be mailed with first-class postage and, because of the plan booklet, it had to be mailed flat. As a result, CountyCare was going to be mailing 425,000 welcome kits with a first-class postage cost of approximately \$950,000.

#### THE SOLUTION

Often, operational efficiencies and cost savings are achieved for MPX clients through mail consolidation. Although, in

this case, deconstructing the package into two mail pieces created a much bigger benefit. The first package included everything but the benefits plan booklet. These items were printed on 8.5" x 11" stock, bi-folded and machine inserted into a 6" x 9" envelope. Due to the reduced size and weight, they were mailed with first-class postage at a discounted rate of \$0.42 each. For the separate mailing, the 8.5" x 11" benefits plan booklet was given a cover letter and was machine inserted into a 9" x 12" envelope, which was sent standard class at a discounted rate of \$0.65 each.

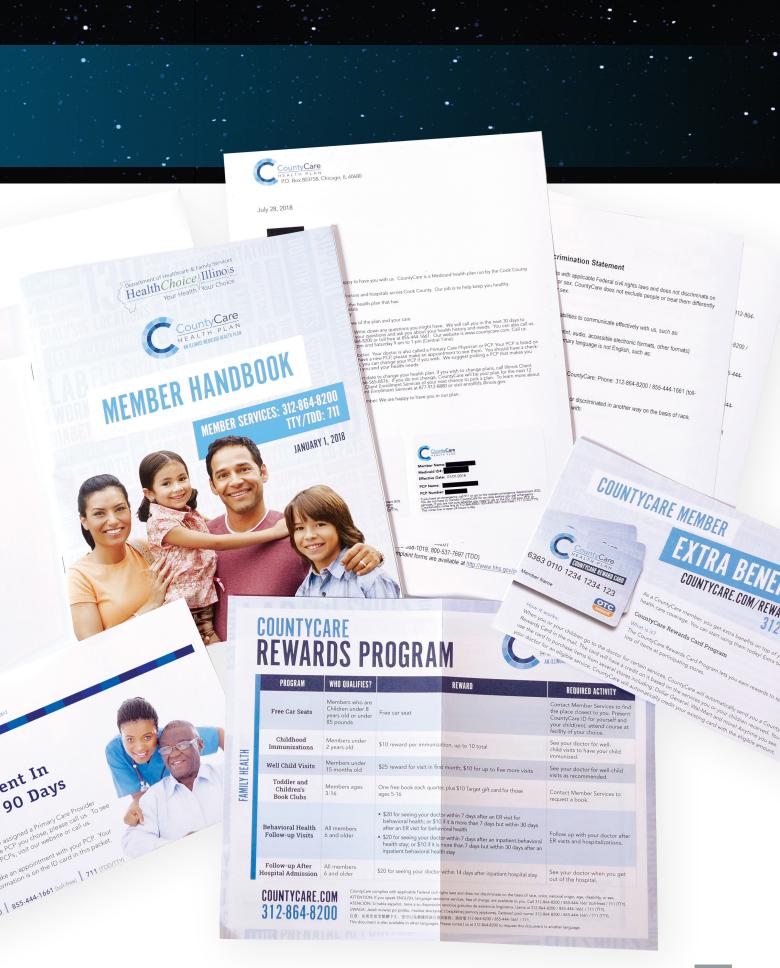
#### THE RESULT

Due to the split mailing and using standard class mailing for the plan booklet, postage costs were reduced by approximately \$600,000, or nearly 60 percent. Ninety percent of the savings was passed through to the client, while about 10 percent was used to pay for the additional mailing.

MPX added significant value for CountyCare by evaluating each print and mail program, looking for cost savings or process improvements and proposing simple solutions to reduce operational strain, save money and improve the member experience.



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## **TAKING TO THE STREETS**

**WINNER: DFS** 

PROJECT: THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED BRAND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

#### THE CHALLENGE

DFS is a wholesale supplier of full-color printing, checks, retail packaging and other products that its dealers resell to their customers. These dealers have multiple sourcing options, so the challenge was to find creative ways to differentiate DFS from others. Two ways they do this is to provide exemplary personto-person customer service and free marketing support. Even so, it remained a challenge to communicate these advantages in believable and compelling ways without sounding boastful.

#### THE SOLUTION

The core idea behind this campaign was to let customers do the talking when it came to describing the relationships they have with DFS. Rather than embarking on a typical testimonial campaign, DFS chose to celebrate the entrepreneurial spirit of customers by capturing them on video telling their own stories in their own ways, both their struggles and their triumphs. This led to a documentary-style series where dealers credited DFS as being a significant component of their successes.

The theme chosen for the series was "The Road Less Traveled," a testament to the fact that entrepreneurs don't take the easy way, or the beaten path, to success. The theme also conjures up romantic notions of a road trip, visiting people and discovering new things. The video series was supported by a variety of media, including email, print advertising, web banners, posters and more.

#### THE RESULT

Entrepreneurs gravitate to other entrepreneurs, and the value of their relationships have both tangible and intangible benefits. They are eager to share ideas and make recommendations relating to how to do things and what companies to work with. As suspected, customers telling peers about the benefits of working with DFS carried more weight and had greater impact than if DFS had tried to communicate the same. Each component of the campaign was coded and tracked. It resulted in both new customer acquisitions and incremental sales from existing customers.





## The Road Less Traveled

## Thank you for joining us!

Offer your customers more by taking advantage of all the printed other your customers more by taking advantage of an tire printed products and services DFS has to help your customers promote and plus, the personalized sales and

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## Thejourney

DFS has been on the road visiting entrepreneurs like you. Watch the video OFS has been on the road visiting entrepreneurs like you. Watch the video of our stop in Wilmington, DE where the Doyle family opens up about their success, what drives them, and how they balance client and family demands. in less than 5 minutes you may uncover a lip that will bring

your business to the next level. Watch this and other episodes of The Road Less Traveled at DFSonline.com/FRLT to see how your business compares.

AMERICAN





# Thank you for joining us!

Take advantage of all the printed products and services DFS has to help your customers promote and manage their businesses — plus, the personalized sales and marketing tools available to grow your business too.

## Free Shipping on new orders' Mention Promo Code: 1Y342 DFSonline.com • 800.225.9528 • DFSfullcolor.com

Next stop Baltimore, MD. watch for it on The Road Less Traveled!



The Road Less Traveled

# Thank you for joining us!

Take advantage of all the printed products and services DFS has to help your customers promote and manage their businesses — plus, the personalized sales and marketing

## Save 25% on new orders\* Mention Promo Code: JX899

DFSonline.com • 800.225,9528 • DFSfullcolor.com

\*Excludes reorders, specially orders, business services, starter kits promotional -seasonal -sea



## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

WINNER: DFS
PROJECT: PRINT, PROMO AND APPAREL DISTRIBUTOR ACQUISITION
CAMPAIGN

#### THE CHALLENGE

Promotional products distributors are always looking for new ways to grow their portfolio and add revenue. We know these distributors wear many hats and do a lot themselves. They don't have time to source multiple suppliers or babysit outsourced orders, so they have similar challenges to print distributors. Although this crossover is intriguing, they are hesitant to offer print due to several reasons, such as product unfamiliarity, lack of training, uncertainty of process, lead times, markups and more.

Full-color promotional print sales are huge and projected to grow significantly over the next two years. For many promotional product distributors who are looking for new ways to grow, full-color promotional print is a natural complement to promo product sales; it helps drive traffic to their customers' events and improves response rates more than promo product alone can.

DFS has a full-color program that fits the way promo product distributors want to work. If a distributor wants to do it themselves, *DFSfullcolor.com* allows them to get competitive quotes 24/7 and easily upload artwork. If they need more support, DFS can assist with quoting, graphic design and more.

#### THE SOLUTION

DFS partnered with Advertising Specialty Institute (ASI), an organization with over 20,000 promotional product distributors as members, to execute a multichannel marketing campaign to build awareness of the promotional print opportunity and DFS' capability as a trusted supplier. Direct mail, email, content marketing and other digital marketing focused on educating distributors and driving leads to a dedicated outbound sales representative who would build relationships.

To grab attention, DFS created a fun 6" x 9" small jigsaw puzzle and inserted into a clear mailer. The outside design showcased the connection between print and promo products with colorful images of popular products to fit a variety of industries. The interactive piece allowed the distributor to take the puzzle pieces apart to reveal an informative graphic highlighting events they sell promo products for, then recommend complimentary print products that could help them "put it all together" for their customers. In addition, the piece revealed all the benefits the distributor could enjoy with DFS, such as a dedicated business development representative, 24/7 access to DFSfullcolor.com, and access to free sales and marketing tools on myDFShub.com

#### THE RESULT

The ASI campaign has resulted in significant increases in full-color revenue and customers. DFS received many calls and quote requests for the piece from distributors who wanted to do something similar.



