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Abstract

Customized Communications: Advanced VDP

Report Fast Facts

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Abstract

This document provides a definition for Advanced VDP as part of the Customized Communications White Paper Series and identifies the market opportunity for print service providers in the In-plant/CRD and commercial print market segments. It also provides examples of applications and strategies for selling into each market segment.

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Introduction

This document defines Advanced Variable Data Printing (VDP) and identifies the market opportunity for the print service provider. It discusses the need for document owners and marketing professionals to deliver more relevant and more effective business and marketing communications, and outlines how advanced variable data printing solutions can be employed to help marketers and document owners achieve business goals. It also contains examples of applications and discusses benefits for corporate communicators, marketers, and printers.

Research shows that in both the business-to-consumer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) environments, audiences prefer personalized and, more importantly, relevant content in business and marketing communications. In a world where the average consumer is bombarded by some 3,000 marketing messages daily, targeted and personalized printed communications can significantly improve audience response and enhance the overall fulfillment of business objectives.

In direct marketing, even the simple use of a recipient's name and address with minimal variable imagery (perhaps based on known demographics such as age or region of the country) can facilitate a successful campaign. With a quality data source and the strategic segmenting of messaging to target specific groups within a defined audience, response rates and campaign results improve dramatically.

Current technology is tearing down barriers to adoption of variable data strategies. Barriers have historically included cost, complex implementation, and risk. Print service providers who are already comfortable with entry-level VDP can now take advantage of this growing market demand by implementing advanced VDP solutions, which are easier to use than ever before. Advanced VDP solutions enable marketers to leverage one or more databases of information to develop relevant communications that improve the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. By accessing a quality, multi-table data source and strategically segmenting the messaging to specific groups within a target audience, campaign results can be dramatically improved.

Advanced VDP utilizes multi-table or relational databases such as Oracle, SQL, dBase, and Microsoft Access; complex, dynamic document composition; and sophisticated and complex business logic. Some applications allow business rules to be programmed through the use of a user-friendly graphic wizard, but in most cases knowledge of advanced scripting with VBScript, Microsoft SQL, Java, and XML are necessary skill requirements.

By moving from Entry-level to Advanced VDP solutions, a company can differentiate its business in the marketplace and improve profitability while moving deeper into the marketing supply-chain. It becomes a high value partner to its customers and an integral part of the campaign development process. This company can open the door to higher margin products and service offerings with new revenue streams and greater potential for customer retention. Marketers benefit through deployment of more effective campaigns. Even end-consumers benefit as they begin to receive more valuable, relevant communications that are targeted toward their interests and needs.

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