



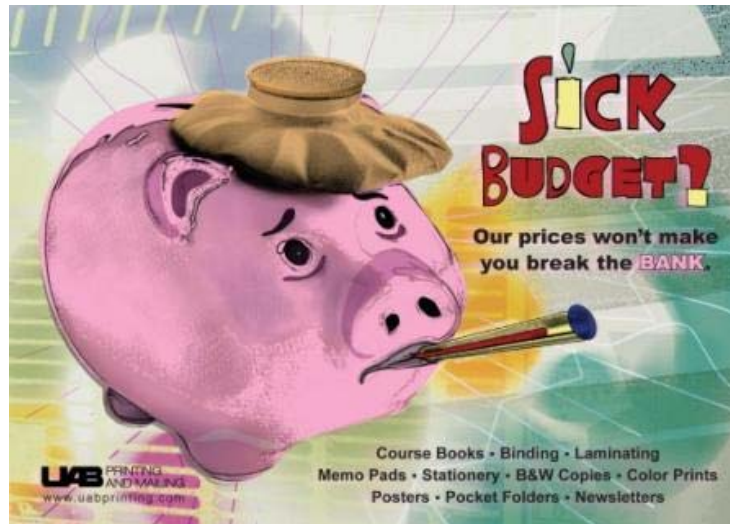
IN-PLANT PRINTING AND MAILING ASSOCIATION

INSIDEDGE

A Newsletter for In-House Printing and Mailing Professionals

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Economy Changes Shop's Forecast



Stephen Murray is a realist. “We all hope the economy has bottomed out, but I don’t know if we are there yet.” Those uncertainties have forced Murray, the director of Business and Auxiliary Services at the University of Alabama in Birmingham to scale back his in-plant’s 2009 business forecast.

“The economy has changed our business forever,” he explains. “We hold no illusions that we will reach the revenues that we had in 2008.” Last year was a record year for the highly-productive 37-member printing and mailing team for the state’s largest employer. “Too many publications have been eliminated or moved solely to the web.” Although their volume of projects has grown, they are finding the projects are now smaller in size and scope.



But even in today's uncertain economy, Murray has discovered there are still plenty of opportunities available. Many of their efforts focus on reducing cost without sacrificing quality. For four consecutive years, for example, they have shrunk printing and mailing costs by implementing new technology and equipment that delivers greater efficiency.

Heading into the new fiscal year, they were also able to cut staffing costs by nearly \$300,000 by not filling vacated positions caused by retirement and attrition. "By focusing on cross-training we move staff from one area to another to meet production/workload requirements," he says. "This has allowed us to be more productive despite fewer FTEs."

And like their customers, they are smart shoppers, always in search of the best price possible. When they buy new equipment, it must have an ROI of 3 years or less. They also emphasize the savings that can be generated through proper equipment maintenance. "Taking care of our equipment, regardless of what it is, has saved us a great deal of money on repairs and allowed us to eliminate some of our service contracts."

One goal of the University of Alabama at Birmingham's print shop has been to retrieve as much outsourced work as possible. This year they brought back inside the printing of 110 different forms for UAB Hospital. Many of the forms, requiring 24-hour or less turnaround, are produced on-demand. Some larger size runs, many which exceed 250,000, are printed offset. "This new business opportunity has had a very positive impact on our financial performance," says Murray.





With the introduction of an iGEN3, XMPie, Halm SuperJet, Roland Wide Format, and the Pitney Bowes Olympus II sorter, they have significantly expanded their capabilities. They recently started producing parking hang tags using a 17 mil polyester paper supplied by Xerox. The tags are

printing on the iGEN, die-cut on the letterpress and then a security foil stamp is applied to the parking tag using their windmill. XMPie software is used for variable data; each hang tag has a unique number, barcode and lot number. “In the last month we have produced over 10,000 parking hang tags for the upcoming academic year,” he says.

They also do a lot of printing and mailing of multiple pieces for studies, surveys and fundraising that require the ability to match-up pieces. Early this year the in-plant worked with the MS National Registry to develop a survey that had a unique identifier on each page. Surveys were sent to individuals throughout the United States who have multiple sclerosis. “We were very proud of the results which exceeded 50%.”



In addition to the 18,000 employees that they serve, they have also stepped up their marketing to the 18,000 students on campus. “That market has a lot of appeal to us. We are crunching the numbers to see if we will buy software that will allow us to begin offering web-based ordering for photo books, calendars and other similar type products,”

Murray explains. “Customers would be able to download software to their computers that would allow them to easily design these types of products.”

But printing is just one arm of the in-plant, which also processes over 4 million pieces of outgoing mail and at least that much inbound mail. They operate a contract post office for the USPS, shouldering the responsibility for delivering all the mail to employees.



“We pre-sort all of the University and Health System’s outgoing first-class letters – over 2 million pieces annually.” With the purchase of a Pitney Bowes Olympus II sorter a year and ago, they now have inbound mail sorting capabilities. The sorting of postcards, letters, and some flats has helped to reduce the time and staff

required to sort inbound mail. They also use the VDP capabilities of the iGEN to address and barcode materials in the printing process, eliminating a step in the mailing process.

Whatever the future holds, one thing is certain. UAB’s Printing and Mailing Services has become the University of Alabama at Birmingham’s one-step solution. “Even if it something we don’t do, we will always try to help our customers by providing the product/service even if it means being the middleman and handling something for only the cost of the item being delivered,” Murray says.

Readers can view the in-plant’s complete list of services by visiting their web site at <http://www.uabprinting.com>

Printing Equipment includes:

AGFA’s ApogeeX

Fuji Javelin with auto loading system

Heidelberg presses: 6-color, 2-color, and 1-color

Ryobi and AB Dick small presses

2-color Halm SuperJet for envelope printing

3 Polar cutting tables including an 115XT with an automatic lift and jogger

Standard Horizon Perfect Binder

Heidelberg Stitchmaster

Heidelberg Letterpress
Heidelberg Windmill
Standard Horizon collator with 2 towers and a stitcher
2 small folding machines
Stahl folder
Rosback (for scoring)
Xerox iGEN3 110
Xerox Nuvera 120EA
Canon 7105 Imagerunner
Xerox 242
54" Roland wide format printer

Mailing Equipment includes:

Bell & Howell swing-arm
Pitney Bowes inserter
Secap Jet 1 with a in-line tabber/labeling device
Pitney Bowes Olympus II sorter
Pitney Bowes Business Manager software and Arrival System