

INSIDEDGE

A Newsletter for In-House Printing and Mailing Professionals

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Western Growers Association Reveals 8 Keys for Staying Competitive



Left to Right: Jesse Silva, Luis Olivarez, Diane Mendez, Robert Delgado, Guillermo Mejia, Paul Aguirre, (not pictured) Pat Collins

When Robert Delgado was recently asked for his shop's secret to success, he was quick to respond.

1. A good graphic artist; one that is creative and works well with customers
2. Good employees with organizational skills and follow through
3. Good communication skills

4. Different types of equipment (offset and digital)
5. Good vendor sources
6. The Internet for gang-run printing (outsourcing jobs that can't be produced internally)
7. Continuing education and knowledge in the latest software and digital services
8. And last, but certainly not least -- "We say no to nothing," he stated emphatically. "We accept every type of job and if we cannot do it, we will find a vendor that can!"

That "never say no" philosophy has paid off with iron clad customer loyalty for the six member in-plant team for Western Growers Association, headquartered in Irvine, CA.

"The wonderful thing is that we have offset presses, a Docutech for black & white, a Xerox 700 digital color machine, and PrintShop Mail for our variable printing needs," shares Delgado, the Print and Mail Manager.

The variety of equipment delivers customers a plethora of money-saving opportunities. The recently acquired Xerox 700 color machine produces 4-color work at a small fraction of the offset cost. If possible, all of the jobs are run 2-up, cutting the cost even further. "The quality is excellent and we even UV coat some of the jobs," he says. "Customers are totally impressed with the quality and low price. This (machine) has brought us so much work."

New services are continually added, mainly because of the growing volume of external work being captured. Currently 30% of the shop's work is insourced. "We don't advertise. All of our new business is word of mouth," he explains. A big slice of the insourced work is high school sports programs for football, baseball, volleyball, etc. Longer runs are offset; shorter runs are digitally produced. If the covers need coating, they are sent to a UV coater and then on to a bindery house for collating and perfect binding.

Their newest acquisition is a Bowe Bell & Howell camera verification system. Delgado explains, "As an insurance company handling confidential information, we are under HIPPA regulations so integrity is very important." The new system

facilitates the processing of about 10,000 pieces daily. It does set verification with OMR marks and a camera, using sequential numbering.

Talking with Delgado, it's obvious that this in-plant team is willing to go the full nine yards to satisfy all customer needs. Today's customers, he says, are seeking a complete one-stop shopping solution. They don't need the hassle of trying to find the best source for a print project or the lowest price; they already have their own full-time jobs.

To ensure the best price, they frequently turn to the Internet for large run printing. "These companies gang-run print jobs, so the cost is very inexpensive," Delgado says. Because the shipping can be costly, they arrange to pick-up all of their jobs.

"We also buy out any envelope run of 20,000 or more," he says. "We find that we can't even buy the stock for what we pay for the print run." If you know the right sources, it's simply a matter of making a phone call and downloading a file. "Outsourcing the envelopes delivers a nice profit."

The bottom line Delgado emphasizes is to position yourself as the go-to source for all printing. "Never say no."