Exciting changes made in 2007......

Software Changes

The past 6 months have also been extremely productive for our software team. We have added many new features to our software offering, all before the end of 2007.

One of the most exciting features is our new and improved ordering interface, that is compatible with all major browsers and operating systems. All optional functionality from our previous ordering screens has now been wrapped up in this incredibly usable interface, including image, font, style and colour changing. This new version works with or without Java installed and has no pop up windows, making it even easier to roll out and support than ever. In addition we have added many new features including an address book, custom reference fields, email receipts, field highlighting and selectable fields on the product visual.

The interface can also be styled in radically different ways allowing you to brand and customise it, making it totally bespoke to your company or client.

Graphics & Photo Handling

Cutting edge image upload and manipulation tools allowing user images to be embedded within templates or ordered as stand alone items. This new feature allows basic image cropping and manipulation to be done directly through your browser.

Site Creator

Additionally a new site creation tool, allowing you to create business to consumer websites for selling stock and template based products easily via the Print Evolved system. This module includes shopping cart and credit card integration facilities. We

have already showcased this new tool in the UK and the USA and received a great response.

Other Features

We also have better ordering interface integration within the enterprise edition, ensuring style consistency throughout the user experience. More customisation possibilities in the enterprise edition, so you can now style your customer catalogues and ordering interface with complete textual and graphical freedom.

Other notable changes are; editable system emails, ensuring all communications from the ordering system are as helpful and branded as possible. Enhanced approval system that allows users that order on behalf of others to decide whether approval is needed at order time and automatic daily reports available in an easy to import CSV format.

Close up

Ruth Gordon

All the way from Aoteara, The Land of the Long White Cloud, Ruth's epic journey to Ivor Solution makes Frodo's quest across middle earth seem like a trip down the shops…

With a wealth of diverse experience designing soft toys, t-shirts and confectionary packaging, Ruth's skills and determination to get the job done on time have made her an invaluable member of the team.

Working with Merci in the pre-press department they have developed an almost psychic understanding, sometimes finishing each other's sentences…

Outside of the office environment is where Ruth's true passions in life are to be found. Mountain biking and snow-boarding being two of her favourite hobbies, and the main reasons she moved to Central London.

NAAAA... TRICKING!
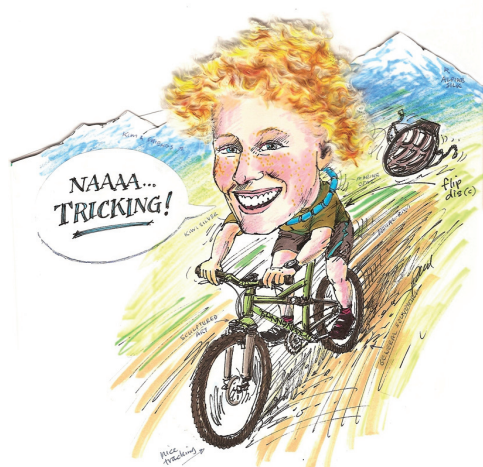
EVOLVED iN PRiNT

Print Evolved's Technical and Marketing Bulletin

Media Journalist Reviews Print Evolved

Print Evolved
10th Birthday

They say you can't teach an old dog new tricks. Well it appears that 'they' are wrong. With ten years' experience in the world of printing, the old dogs at Ivor Solution have built their reputation on using the most advanced and innovative tricks of technology to become field leaders in digital printing solutions provision.

I visited the company behind the world's first automated web-to-print system, to celebrate their tenth birthday and discover how they planned to proceed with their pioneering print progress.

Arriving at the sparkling new offices in Clerkenwell – an area rich in printing history – I was warmly greeted by Ivor Jacobs, Managing Director and Principal of Ivor Solution. He was keen to elaborate on the company's development from a small software outfit that outsourced all its printing, to a highly successful team of dedicated staff,

working at the vanguard of web-based template applications.

The key to their success, explained Ivor, was, and still is, the customer. It is the customer that has shaped the way that Ivor Solution operates, and their needs that have dictated the development of the company's web application, through its sites, CardCorp.co.uk (retail) and Print Evolved (trade).

But it was Ivor Jacobs' long-sighted anticipation of the potential of the internet that provided Ivor Solution with a means to empower the customer. The minute Ivor saw that the internet could provide the link between the customer and the finished product, he determined to develop a web based application. The customer would use graphic templates, modifying them online and sending the files straight into the digital workflow, thus cutting out huge chunks of admin.

Since the initial implementation of this unprecedented innovation, Ivor Solution proceeded to dedicate considerable amounts of energy to streamlining and expanding a unique and extensive suite of software modules, under the Print Evolved brand. With a wry smile that recalled years of hard work and planning, Ivor

elaborated on the company's expansion:
"We have dedicated over 70,000 hours to the research, development and delivery of a truly unique industry-leading web-based application that we can all be proud of. We have learnt a huge amount during our first ten years. Driven by our customer's demands and diverse requirements we have ensured our technology delivers a robust and dynamic service offering."

> ## Over 70,000 hours of research and development

This offering was apparent during my office tour, when I discovered for myself just what these advances mean in practical terms. The software applications I encountered seemed, in some respects, far superior to the likes of well known software packaged products. Ivor Solution has apparently based its success on the implementation of a real working application, rather than

> ## The key to our success, was, and still is, the customer

In this issue

INVITATION - Examine Web to Print in action at our new London City premises.

Here's hoping for a short winter...

There is no doubt that the printing industry is going through a period of dramatic change. This transformation is happening as the emphasis shifts from the press to the workflow. The printer's skill is no longer in providing good quality print work but in managing the whole order to delivery cycle.

As specialists in web to print services we believe that we have indeed been creating a highly efficient workflow starting when the end customer places his or her order on the web.

So it may seem paradoxical that our extended entry into the physical aspects of print is just beginning. Our Indigo 5500 comes on stream in January. However, we have reached the point where the demands of our customers is moving to requiring far greater personalised responses. Delivery times are being looked at in hours rather than days. Our extreme personalisation products, like the bolder folder needs same day turnround. The value that we are adding to our software offering by printing is proving itself not just to our own profitability but also to many of our customer who have asked for the full workflow to be handled by ourselves.

Print Manager's need to have a trusted supplier who can work fully electronically. This keeps the Print Manager in the loop but not responsible for the day to day operation. We hope that this means that there will be more time for Print Managers to sell our services and so benefit us all.

Wishing you a happy and successful new year!

Regards

Ivor Jacobs, Managing Director

---

the theoretical models that these competing systems are promoting.

Such advanced software programming has led to some truly impressive results and I was talked through one particularly startling order, delivered on behalf of a company with over 500 branches, who have all their marketing collateral online.

The demonstration proved how individual managers are able to order everything from a business card to an A0 poster. The degree of automation is remarkable. At the front end, the manager keys in his or her branch number, which auto-populates their main details on the products, with the manager then making the local changes that are shown as full online proofs. Meanwhile, at the back end, the orders immediately join the various print queues and are batch run through a conversion program to the output devices. All finishing is then carried out in house, with all admin work centralised, allowing Ivor Solution to keep track of any number of orders, produced anywhere in the world.

Having shown me the web-to-print systems in action, Ivor took me to meet Jeff Birch and Neil Forrest, co-Directors of Ivor Solution. Jeff was happy to explain just how far the company's software applications can benefit the customer:

Pictured left to right: Ivor Jacobs, Neil Forrest, Jeff Birch

---

> ## "driven by our customer's demands and diverse requirements"

"They have been built by printers who have to produce the work and therefore back end automation is just as important as the front end experience. With all the software built in house we test everything out in real printing environments and that is why we can guarantee that the customer interacts with, and sees, what will be printed. Customers love this." Determined to hear from the customers themselves whether the benefits were as evident as Jeff described, I quizzed a new customer, who was being shown a first rehearse of a system based on the Print Evolved software platform. Himself a printer, the customer, Alan Mitchell of CCB in Glasgow, explained his reason for choosing Print Evolved: "I looked at other packages but didn't feel comfortable in spending many thousands when for a few hundred I have a brilliant system that is just right for my company."

In terms of technical support, too, the customer appears to be highly valued by the staff at Ivor Solution, sometimes even to the detriment of

---

The busy studio in Print Evolved

company expansion – so concerned are the team with ensuring that existing customers are getting the most from the applications' potential. Neil Forrest, Development Director, admitted that "we spend much time and effort with customer education. That takes a helping attitude that sometimes conflicts with a sell, sell, sell approach. But we would rather develop relationships with customers that will be with us long term, than make sales now and store up problems later on."

For Jeff, this means being there to guide the customer through every step of the process.
"We know how difficult it can be to utilise complex technology. We are not just affecting one aspect but the entire workflow from the moment the

Print Evolved production

> ## "out of the box solutions are not always the best way"

end customer wants to place an order. We have to think of all the stakeholders in the cycle, the customer, approvers, marketing department, designers, financial people, print managers, printers, other suppliers, finishing requirements, despatch and much more. We are also often asked for requests and clearly we have to consult with the customer to identify real requirements. Out of the box solutions are not always the best way so we continue to bang the drum of identifying what you want before you buy, so helping in that identification process."

So, having seen what progress had been made in the last ten years, I was eager to learn what the next ten years would hold. I was told to expect a big leap forward with the purchase of an Indigo 5500 digital press, due to be installed with ancillary equipment next month, which will allow the company to carry out further R & D, especially with the seven colours available. Then, reminiscent of the prescience

---

shown when he first developed web-to-print software, Ivor expounded on the type of service he aims to be delivering from now into the future. He called it "Extreme Personalisation."
"When we were producing labels and business cards twenty years ago, people thought we were mad to do small orders at a set price. We took on many costs when we only had one or two orders in a day, but when we built up volumes the work not only became profitable but engendered great customer loyalty. Our new products are in this ilk where, using all the know-how of the web, software, digital print and finishing, we have products that are totally customised on line, even with photos and logos, and produced, to begin with, in ones and twos, at a heavy cost internally, but we hope will go into their 1000s (made up of many ones and twos) in the not-too-distant future."

By the time I had finished my tour of Ivor Solution's offices, I had been wholly convinced of the error of the old maxim. Not only had I been shown that it was possible to teach an old dog new tricks, but it was clear that the ten-year-olds at Ivor Solution would be sniffing out technologies, and teaching new tricks to the rest of the pack, for many years to come.

*Written by
London-based writer and journalist
Josh Freedman Berthoud*