



The transition of specialized printing company
Lijnco into a digital player

About Lijnco

Lijnco is a specialized printing company that has shifted their focus to offering their products online. In 2010, they made plans to make their products available to customers through a new e-commerce channel. YTEC has guided Lijnco in this transition, which started with a consultancy project that explored the opportunities and challenges of e-commerce. After this, YTEC helped Lijnco with a number of projects, over the course of several years. YTEC has led IT-related projects and has executed some of them as Lijnco's IT partner.

Challenges for Lijnco as a specialized printing company

At the start of the project, the printing industry was developing rapidly. Low-cost players in web-to-print and printing-on-demand such as Vistaprint, Flyerzone, and PrintCarrier had already automated mass printing, driving down profit margins. Printers were forced to specialize or differentiate themselves with additional services such as personalized printing. This differentiation requires new competencies supported by information technology (IT).

New competencies supported by IT

YTEC helped Lijnco with formulating a strategy for e-commerce. That enabled the company to change from a traditional printer into a mature digital player. Lijnco already had a set of web solutions, some of which they offered as Lijnco products, and some they had implemented for their customers. Although Lijnco was already present online, the company lacked knowledge of IT and internet marketing.

YTEC based the new strategy on Lijnco's marketing plan, a competition analysis and existing web applications. YTEC's consultants also advised about the graphic charter and the formation of project teams.

Lijnco wanted to prepare for a future of web-to-print: the automation of every step, from an order placed through the website, up to the delivery to the customer. YTEC has done the information analyses as well as the implementation of these new e-commerce solutions.

The consultancy with YTEC has answered questions such as

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- How can the vision of management be translated into practical steps toward market penetration and consolidation?
- Which web projects have priority?

The consulting and projects by YTEC support Lijnco's new competencies, such as processing variable production data and a workflow for personalized printing. Customers can order online, and the system integrates the variable data of the customer into the production process.

The digital printer and variable data

Personalized marketing relies on variable data to reach the prospect through the right channel, at the right moment. A common example is a letter with the customer's name in the opening words and a payment slip attached for continuing their subscription. The customer receives that letter just before their current subscription ends. Another example is the car dealer who sends you a special offer, just when your car is due for maintenance. Dataflows of unique customer features come together in a printout to boost the effectiveness of a marketing campaign.

Traditional printing companies can use variable data to take a position against low-cost players that limit themselves to mass printing products. The challenge is to develop a new competency: processing variable dataflows. In a personalized campaign, printed materials have unique features such as a name, an address or a personalized offer. That type of printing requires a workflow that is supported by IT.

Shifting the focus to IT and e-commerce

Lijnco wanted to invest in a future as an IT organization. YTEC has suggested some options for the development of IT competencies. E-commerce organizations are multidisciplinary, and Lijnco could attract new talent for a future as an IT company.

Ordering a batch of payment slips on Lijnco's website

The types of printing that Lijnco does are complex because the products depend on a lot of variables. An example of this is the ordering of a batch of payment slips on the website. Payment slips have to comply with strict regulations. Every printed payment slip has numbers that are unique per customer and type of money transfer. The variable data for these numbers have to be processed without error. YTEC has developed the software to print these payment slips at the required level of quality.

Printing lottery tickets according to a prize plan

Not all of Lijnco's products are online offers. For example, Lijnco prints lottery tickets. Each ticket has a number, and some of these link to a prize. The tickets also have numbers for checking the authenticity when the winner claims a prize.

The system, which is developed by YTEC, has to distribute the prize money over the printed lottery tickets. It has to be redundant for printing errors. Whenever a batch of lottery tickets has to be reprinted, the prize plan must never be in jeopardy. Lijnco can use system to activate batches of tickets when ready for distribution. The system empowers the distribution of lottery tickets with the guarantee that the prize plan remains consistent.

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