

Making It All Work

By Julie Greenbaum
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MANY COMMERCIAL printers would agree that to survive in the current market, integration of commercial printing along with other marketing channels is no longer an option, but a necessity. In 2009, Moorestown, NJ-based Edmunds Communications Group was formed on that premise through a partnership of commercial printer Prism Color and Edmunds Direct Mail—both long-time service providers in the New Jersey/Philadelphia region.

Since its outset, Edmunds Communications Group considers itself more than just a printing company, but a communications company that specializes in printing. “The partnership came at a time when both companies were looking for organic business growth, as well as to expand their existing product and service portfolios,” notes Brian Romani, president of Edmunds Communications Group. “With client demand growing on both ends, we realized that the partnering of the two companies was going to be critical in order to fulfill those needs.”

While many printers are still trying to climb out of the recession, combining the services of both companies gave Edmunds a firmer footing. But that is not to say that the company has not felt its impact. Romani has noticed a fundamental shift in the way that his clients purchase printing.

“We are finding that print-centric customers are much more sophisticated in their overall buying habits,” he says. “Clients have also become more selective in their mining of mailing lists. To make up for (lost) volume, we implemented a more aggressive sales effort and are focusing on products that are peripheral to print, such as promotional products, social media and data analytics.”

Today, the 120-employee opera-

tion serves 300 clients nationwide, and has experienced a double-digit sales growth in both its traditional offset and digital divisions. The one-stop shop offers a wide range of services, including sheetfed offset printing; digital and wide-format output; Web-to-print portals; database management; binding and finishing; and inventory control/fulfillment. Printed products range from direct mail, brochures, posters and banners, to point-of-sale signage, storefront displays and promotional products.

Offset and Digital Gear

The partnership has also allowed Edmunds to streamline its equipment arsenal. The company currently operates three six-color, 40” Mitsubishi sheetfed presses with



Kevin O'Neil operates a Polar 115 paper cutter.

in-line aqueous coaters; a five-color, 29” Heidelberg with in-line aqueous coater; and a Canon imagePRESS C700VP digital color press.

Finishing gear consists of various Stahl and Baum folders, a Polar cutter and two Duplo DBM 5000 bookletmakers. Its lettershop and mailing operation houses a six-station Bell & Howell inserter, four Xerox Nuvera digital printers, and several laser printers and inkjet addressing systems.

The company serves a range of vertical markets, including the gaming, healthcare, retail, non-for-profit, education and the financial industries. Edmunds Direct Mail has been a provider to the local gaming industry for more than 20 years, offering printing, mail house and fulfillment services, as well as list procurement and data hygiene. With many of the casinos just miles away, a large portion of the company’s printing and mailing comes from the gaming sector.

Several members of the Edmunds management team specialize in marketing and branding for this sector, as well as casino direct mail. “Our management staff brings years of casino marketing experience to the company,” explains Ed Brown, president of Prism Color.

“The gaming industry as well as the other industries we serve are very competitive markets, so we have combined a blend of expertise and strategy to be more in sync with all of our clients’ marketing needs.”

Today, the company considers itself more than just an order taker. It has built a model where it has become more of an extension of its

clients’ marketing departments, teaching them about all of the new and emerging marketing tools that are available to them.

Promoting Its Services

Edmunds has embraced these new marketing methods to promote its own capabilities. For example, when a visitor enters the Edmunds Website, a Nomad will display on the top of the page—in this case, it is an image of Brian Romani delivering a welcome message.

Another method of self-promotion used is social media, such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Edmunds also offers its clients tutorials on how to use social media to help strengthen their brands.

“SIGNIFICANT GROWTH AREAS FOR THE NEXT ONE TO TWO YEARS WILL BE CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF OUR WEB-TO-PRINT PLATFORM AND OUR E-COMMERCE TOOLS.”

—Brian Romani

Since taking the helm of Edmunds in 2009, Romani has focused on expanding the company’s Web-to-print and digital printing platforms. He foresees a large upside for Web-to-print as the market continues to evolve and mature, and reveals that the company has further plans to expand its Xerox digital platform.

“Significant growth areas for the next one to two years will be continued development of our Web-to-print platform and our e-commerce tools,” he concludes. “Our fulfillment business, supported by the printed materials that we produce, should also generate strong growth.”

PI



Standing with one of their three six-color, 40” Mitsubishi presses is the Edmunds Communications Group management team of (from the left): Kevin Biglin, company partner; Ron Krane, partner and co-founder of Prism Color; Brian Romani, partner and president; and Ed Brown, partner and co-founder of Prism Color.