

# Article



## Is it Time to Reevaluate Your Print MIS?

*By: Stephanie Pieruccini*

Print Management Information Systems (MIS) are often seen as the brain of a print operation, holding all of the information related to production. These systems track jobs in real-time through each step, delay, and change as they move through the print production process. While the majority of print service providers have implemented some sort of process to manage business and production information, many have developed their own solutions or have neglected to upgrade their systems, resulting in information disparities, barriers to greater automation, and lack of support for new technologies and processes that have been added over time. To avoid these issues, print service providers should consider how the MIS solutions currently available on the market can help meet their production and business goals.

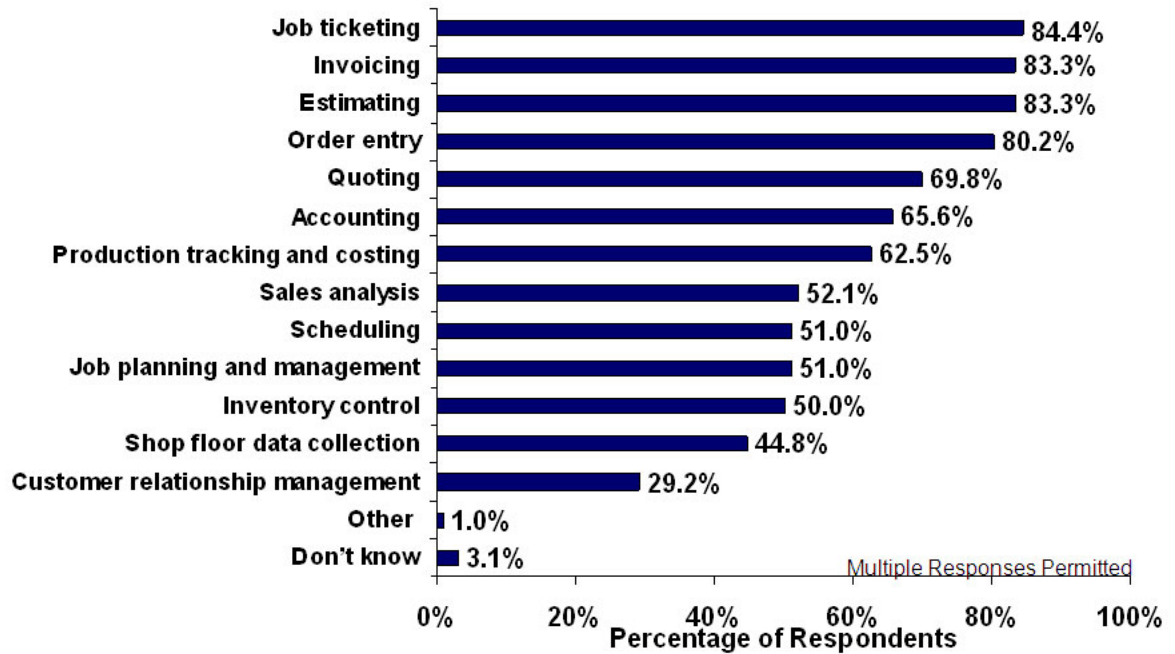
The print industry continues to face dynamic change, and internally-built or legacy Print MIS solutions simply can't match this pace of change. Nevertheless, purchasing or upgrading a Print MIS solution is not an inexpensive or quick task—a significant investment is required to fully reap the benefits. Consolidation also plays a role. When an acquired company is integrated into an existing organization, it often makes sense to replace existing Print MIS from multiple vendors with one system from a single vendor.

End-to-end integration/automation, centralized information management in real-time, and reporting capabilities are just some of the key benefits of the Print MIS technologies available today. Many Print MIS solutions have expanded to include the newer functions required by today's print businesses, such as Web-enabled job submission, mailing and inventory management, accounting, access through mobile devices, and even Customer Relationship Management (CRM).

The breaking point of outdated systems is a reality that service providers are facing as their businesses are relying more heavily on real-time business information. InfoTrends' recent *Production Software Investment Outlook* found that the interest in Print MIS investment from print service providers rose 6.9% between 2009 and 2010. This was the greatest increase in interest out of all software categories. The need for improved efficiency and accurate information management is driving print service providers of all types to seek advanced solutions that will keep up with their changing production needs.

The print service providers that have Print MIS solutions in place use many of its available features, with the more traditional functions such as job ticketing, invoicing, estimating, and order entry at the top of the list. The selling point for Print MIS has expanded beyond these key functions to promote end-to-end job management from job submission through Web-to-print, to delivery via mailing/shipping, and customer management along the way. Newer features, such as CRM, are beginning to see more use.

**Figure 1: Which of the following functions do you utilize within your print MIS?**



N = 96 Respondents who currently own a Print MIS  
 InfoTrends' Workflow Solutions End-User Survey, 2010

To assist you with finding the right Print MIS to suit your changing needs, InfoTrends is developing *The Ultimate Guide to Print MIS*. This document is designed to serve as a comprehensive guide of the leading Print MIS solutions currently available on the market, including Avanti Systems (Graphic Arts Management System), EFI (PrintSmith, Pace, Monarch, and Radius), Enterprise Print Management Solutions (Enterprise 32), Hiflex (Hiflex MIS), Technique, and Tailored Solutions (LabelTraxx). Specifically designed for print service providers, the Ultimate Guide provides information on key factors that should be considered when choosing the right solution for your business. *The Ultimate Guide to Print MIS* will be available in Q4 of 2011.

To learn more about this Ultimate Guide and others, visit <http://ultimateguide.infotrends.com>.

## About the Author

### **Stephanie Pieruccini**

Senior Research Analyst, InfoTrends

[stephanie\\_pieruccini@infotrends.com](mailto:stephanie_pieruccini@infotrends.com)

+1 781-616-2109

Stephanie Pieruccini is a Senior Research Analyst for InfoTrends' Production Workflow & Custom Communications Service. In this role, she is responsible for responding to client inquiries, conducting market research and analysis, and providing coverage of industry events.