



Affinity Express digitizing services deliver high quality, fast turn times and lower costs

A client of Affinity Express is a leading supplier of apparel, headgear and promotional products across the U.S. and Europe. The client's mission is to sell top-quality, affordable products and it has a solid reputation of commendable service established over more than 50 years in the industry. The client receives orders for embroidery digitizing from its customers through various channels such as the company website, email, telephone and fax; which are submitted to its centralized system. The orders are then sent to Affinity Express either via email or IDEA, the company's online order management system.

Challenges

In 2009, the client realized that its embroidery digitizing process was running into major problems. Hiring and training costs for its in-house operations were at an all-time high. Given the seasonal demand for promotional products, staffing needs fluctuated significantly in different months.

In addition, the process was complex. The client had a diverse range of products, each with different specifications. New product introduction necessitated rigorous training for the embroidery team in the products, specifications and features. Finding the right employees and retaining them was proving more and more difficult.

The Affinity Express Solution

The client partnered with Affinity Express to effectively manage the embroidery digitizing process, with

the objectives of reducing operational costs while ensuring quality. In its quest to understand the client's needs, the Affinity Express team did a thorough study of the current procedures. An effective solution was developed to address the challenges faced by the client and enable it to successfully outsource digitizing to the Affinity Express facility in India.

Some of the steps taken by the Affinity Express team to ensure high levels of quality included:

- Setting density for different fabric/thread colors
- Implementing a punching process for designs on caps
- Incorporating the client's thread inventory in the Affinity Express system

Client Benefits

- Client-specific embroidery standards and specifications
- Guaranteed product quality
- Improved turnaround times
- Extra staff coverage to work on weekends in case of high volumes
- Effective handling of seasonal peaks through utilization of extra resources as required
- Continuous reduction in errors
- Round-the-clock support to ensure quick resolution of issues
- Lower operating costs



Managing Quality

Errors in embroidery lead to flawed products and dissatisfied customers. The Affinity Express quality assurance team is committed to maintaining the client's reputation of reliably delivering high quality. The Affinity Express digitizing team maintains an accuracy level of 98% or higher and continuously strives to improve by means of regular feedback and training to team members.

Managing Delivery Times

The Affinity Express quality operations team is dedicated to lowering delivery failure rates by managing rushes and super rushes (four- to twelve-hour turn times). Compliance with these requirements is at 98.5%. An average of 140 orders are processed weekly. The team aims to improve further by enhancing productivity and streamlining the process.

Results

Affinity Express has enabled the client to reduce internal resources to focus on the core business, lower operating costs and increase efficiency. Most importantly, the client is assured that products delivered by Affinity Express will meet its customers' exacting standards and specifications. The relationship Affinity Express has developed with the client over the last year demonstrates the efficacy of the virtual business model and outsourced digitizing services.

About Affinity Express

Affinity Express is the leading onsite, onshore and offshore provider that is 100% dedicated to high-volume advertising and marketing production solutions. Headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, Affinity Express maintains production centers in Pune, India and Manila, Philippines. Affinity Express delivers services 24 hours per day and six days per week, producing products in more than 30 software packages and multiple platforms. The company manages its unique creative process with a continuous improvement approach based on Lean Six Sigma, so that clients receive reliable output with fast turn times for their mission-critical digital files.

The comprehensive, customized advertising and marketing production solutions of Affinity Express help clients lower production costs, generate higher profits and gain a competitive edge, without having to invest in establishing and maintaining these capabilities internally.

For more information, contact Affinity Express at (847) 930-3205 or visit www.affinityexpress.com