



Building More than Connections with World-Class Integration

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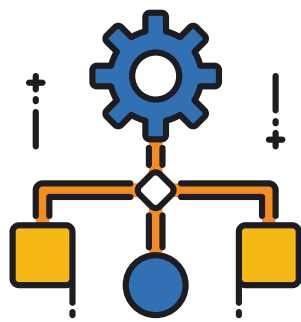
Every workflow has handshakes between software products that allow data exchange while processes carry work forward to the next touchpoint. These integration points have rules and policies that enable automation, reduce the people in the operations, and accelerate the flow. In a well-designed integration, every business and production application across the business becomes more robust because it can access more data. Estimating and quoting is more powerful because it knows the historical engagements and costs and aligns with today's business expectations. Web2Print front ends are more capable because they can see the machine schedules. Mailing and shipping are more accurate because those processes can see where jobs are in the queue and their due dates. Even the business systems that manage sales and invoicing are more potent because changes and their costs are captured to be fed back to update job pricing and margins.

The handshakes and connections are more than data feeds. Each integration point is the launching point for myriad connections that build the total picture of both the shop floor and the business. Creating an integrated workflow platform where data flows seamlessly between processes adds capacity through efficiency and increases job margins through accuracy. The promise of an end-to-end workflow fully integrated into the business and production workflows is comprehensive visibility for all stakeholders.

While some integration points are obvious, like sending machine status information to a production dashboard, data relevant to analysis and business processes can be hidden and missed during integration projects. When an integration project is launched with multiple companies involved, accountability for integration points is more challenging to manage, often leaving missed integration opportunities. Data that should flow from one process to another may hit an internal roadblock and never update the following process. Missed handshakes may not come to light until a problem requires costly changes, which may only patch the issue. The ineffective workflow integration becomes less efficient and riskier.

To reach that high-functioning state, where business, process, and shop floor data is collected and analyzed, requires integration by a team that understands all possible connections. The goal is an end-to-end integration that leaves no stone unturned. To get there, every department and every team has a role to play. Executives, Sales, Customer Service, IT, Production and Logistics team members must be able to articulate how they do their job, what would make it more efficient, and where they experience bottlenecks. The process begins with the **Integration Town Hall**.

INTEGRATION TOWN HALL




The best practice in integration is for everyone to begin on the same baseline. This may be harder than it sounds. Each day brings new orders, new change requests, scheduling changes, and delivery requirements that build fences around each department. Dashboards help, but they are only as reliable as the data that feeds them. In practice, private spreadsheets, sticky notes, whiteboards, emails, notes from phone calls, and walking tours of the shop floor and warehouse may hold the true state of the production. Forecasts based on estimates, which feed budgeting and investment planning, can be widely out of sync with the actual revenue opportunity. Each call, each floor tour, and each intervention to correct a job consumes time and money.

Disconnects evolve from those emails, conversations, phone calls and floor tours because there is no single system of record. New tools and equipment can change how jobs should be specified, but all options may not be updated in all relevant systems, leading to more disconnects. New finishing devices can sit idle if their capabilities are missing from the sales team training and order entry environment. New substrates or substrates that are no longer available can change production options, causing extended communication loops with customers and production, delaying work and wasting capacity. While everyone has the best intentions, the lack of precise data to inform decisions has a real cost to the business.

Meeting everyone's requirements requires research into the current state and the desired state, and the available solutions along with the implementation plans used by their vendors. A solution partner that integrates all elements with a single point of contact that holds accountability is a preferred approach.

Start by gathering requirements but also emphasizing how important the project will be to growing the business. Consider an Integration Town Hall to capture everyone's questions, needs, bottlenecks, and operational gaps in available information.

Common questions to pose:

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- 1. What integrations will make us more effective?**
 - 2. What should sales and customer service know that would make them more effective?**
 - 3. What tools are we paying for that we aren't using?**
 - 4. Can we identify the sources of conflicting information?**
 - 5. How many private spreadsheets are used to keep track of jobs, files, assets, and consumables?**

Poll the teams and ask them to come to the town hall prepared to identify their bottlenecks and questions. Ask everyone to bring an example that highlights their challenges and suggestions for solutions. The goal is to lay everything on the table and then begin to find the gaps. Everyone is a stakeholder in the integration plan.

INTEGRATING MODERN WORKFLOW TECHNOLOGIES

Adopting new workflow solutions brings the promise of efficiency, optimization, and reliability, but embarking on workflow upgrades or migrations without a plan can result in islands of automation, inconsistent data handling, and missed opportunities. Workflow is no longer a simple linear process, where one system feeds to another, and standalone tools can function effectively. Today, the workflow rules require data to move more freely among processes, informing linear, non-linear, and external functions. The new workflow paradigm demands full integration, so all business and production processes share common data pools and analytics to guide the business.

Review your current workflow. You may find unconnected tools, manual data transfers, and missing connectivity needed to keep current. There may be solutions sitting on proprietary appliances and servers that require specialized resources to add new functions or connect to new systems resulting in missed updates. Custom scripts linking Web2Print, Print MIS elements, and Prepress systems are also a risk. A typical result is partly implemented and partly integrated software tools that become a roadblock to building secure, scalable handshakes that reliably update business and production systems. This is how private spreadsheets and workflow status whiteboards become the offline storage of current production with no opportunity to update essential dashboards.

Modern workflow practices have moved away from those appliance and server-based solutions requiring multiple professional services engagements to integrate diverse business systems correctly. Today, tools that support Application Programming Interfaces (API) and Software Development Kits (SDK) are the best paths to integration. With KODAK PRINERGY On Demand and solutions from Kodak partners, integration results in a seamless, end-to-end workflow that provides visibility to every stakeholder, all managed by a single PRINERGY On Demand team of experts with the right skills and knowledge of the software and processes.

The importance of that visibility becomes clear when you consider the story of a large commercial print shop. Their custom workflow had become a burden. The lead coder retired, and as they hired new team members,

they discovered multiple programming languages, freeware, and software tools that were out of support. After averting a failure to deliver on a print job, they decided to install one of the top workflow productivity solutions. During installation, the professional services teams discovered that there was more custom code linking diverse applications than they estimated and ran out of time to complete the implementation. After two years, the partly installed solution was still in place, but the production team had built a series of spreadsheets to manage their needs and then keyed data into the MIS at the end of the day to update the system. Management was unaware and thought they had at least a partially working system. A later assessment showed that they had hired additional staff to handle the manual exchange of data while the IT team continued to write workaround code to try to feed the dashboards. And they were still missing analytics!

If this sounds familiar, there are steps to take to build a better workflow. The technology is available today, and it can make you more efficient. Your Kodak team can supply an integrated end-to-end workflow system that eliminates the need for custom scripts and single-function point tools. They can integrate it with your business platform for seamless data exchange, supporting a migration strategy that is easy to use, secure, scalable, and reliable.

When your workflow is fully integrated, data flows through the system to keep every person and process informed. There is no need to switch between platforms; the data from all input sources is normalized to be shared by each of the business and production applications. To prepare for success, use these tips.

THREE TIPS FOR OWNERS AND MANAGEMENT



TIP 1: Look beyond the numbers. Look at your technology and how you are positioned for growth. The print industry becomes more competitive each day, so flexibility in product offerings is essential. Growing that flexibility requires looking at the time and effort to estimate and quote jobs, the accuracy of those quotes, and the actual costs of goods sold. If your current business systems are not sharing data with the Print MIS, ERP and supporting business systems, this is the time to add that level of visibility to position for future growth.



TIP 2: Understand the costs associated with each process. These are more than facility costs, hardware costs, subscription or maintenance costs for software, and the burdened cost of the staff. Look for the cost of problem-solving for poorly specified jobs and the costs of multiple loops through processes like file preparation, color management and approvals. While these are production processes, loops can be hidden from view even as they consume time and resources. Understanding these costs may help justify the investment in an integrated end-to-end workflow.



TIP 3: Look for missed opportunities. The business has invested in people, machines, and software. The question is: Are you leveraging everything you have? Your production software may offer options to produce a broader range of products, unique impositions, or to take advantage of ganging and nesting to improve efficiency. In a highly integrated workflow, those efficiencies should be trackable as part of your profit margin calculations. Look beyond buying a one-for-one replacement. Look for a scalable workflow that helps to grow your business.

THREE TIPS TO SUPPORT THE SALES TEAM

Business comes through the efforts of the sales team and those who support them, but there may also be work that arrives through customer and consumer web-to-print portals. When the inbound sales channels aren't coordinated, the ability to know the available inventory and machine schedules devolves into phone calls, emails and texts that put deliveries for new and regular customers at risk. An integrated workflow can be a salesperson's best friend.



TIP 1: Seek efficiency! PRINERGY On Demand allows the sales team to seamlessly collaborate with internal team members and customers without the email loops. It will save time spent chasing options with the production team.



TIP 2: Seek consistency! PRINERGY On Demand brings real-time communication to estimating and quoting, bypassing manual methods. Differentiate your level of responsiveness, and customers will respond.



TIP 3: Seek value! Acclimate your customers to the self-service experience while freeing sales and CSR resources to maintain close client relationships based on bringing new ideas to differentiate their projects.

The PRINERGY On Demand integration with MICROSOFT Office 365 and MS Teams can help create a well-integrated environment that fosters coordination of job specifications, estimating and quoting, inventory availability, and machine time because the systems work together to keep dashboards updated. The team can focus on adding value to customer relationships and maintaining customer loyalty.



THREE TIPS FOR THE IT TEAM

Integration of the business and production systems sits with the IT team. Installing and supporting software is only part of the mission; this team also researches platforms, products, and automation.

TIP 1: Create a chart of integration points to share with all departments. They know which software products they use but may not understand where data flows through the systems. Cooperation is more manageable when everyone sees the big picture.

TIP 2: Create an integration schedule that shows impacts to processes. The initial integration may require some functions to be offline and unavailable for short periods, but once the project is complete, the upgrades will come without interruption. Coordinating with sales and production so that critical functions are available during seasonal rushes will keep everyone comfortable.

TIP 3: Enable dashboards as early in the integration as possible. Dashboards allow for self-service, freeing resources across the business.

The workflow in every business setting has unique features and requirement. The PRINERGY On Demand team can coordinate implementation and training for new workflow features and integration into the business processes. The good news is that the post-integration environment will provide more scalability and reliability!

THE KODAK ADVANTAGE

The story of workflow integration has all the elements of a chocolate souffle. There are many ingredients, specific instructions for combining those ingredients, and guidance on how long to bake to avoid undercooking or overcooking. The precision of the integration in the hands of a schooled baker produces the tasty treat. But, if the elements don't come together with that precision, you have a pan of misaligned ingredients that fail the test of being a chocolate souffle.

Upgrading workflow requires that same attention to detail and the same professional expertise. Some workflow vendors and integrators may tell you to sit back and relax, and they will take care of everything. Customer feedback tells us that approach rarely results in a truly integrated workflow. Installing KODAK PRINERGY On Demand involves everyone in the business, from the back office to the shop floor. The installation team wants to know how you run your business so that the final end-to-end workflow ecosystem integrates seamlessly with your presses, MIS/ERP, and all supporting systems. Then you can sit back and relax.

Workflows that sit on proprietary servers and appliances will struggle with the demands of growing businesses and changes in the workflow components. The PRINERGY On Demand solution eliminates software silos, connecting every department so the business can scale to meet growing demand while staying integrated, automated, and reliable. With the added power of the MICROSOFT platform and MICROSOFT DYNAMICS 365 Business Central, PowerBI, one of the most widely used analytics tools, becomes part of the integration. Integrated with MICROSOFT is PrintVIS, the cloud-based solution that coordinates production details from job order entry to delivery, further enabling the cloud-based ecosystem, with roots firmly planted in your business and production needs.

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