



PDF Workflows

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Gradual Software

Agenda

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Agenda

- Positioning workflow automation

Agenda

- Positioning workflow automation
- Common misconceptions

Agenda

- Positioning workflow automation
- Common misconceptions
- Workflow automation options

Agenda

- Positioning workflow automation
- Common misconceptions
- Workflow automation options
- Return on investment

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Workflow

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What is workflow?

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What is workflow?

- “The decisions, steps and information paths taken in creating and outputting a digital document”
Adobe website

Classic prepress workflow

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Classic prepress workflow

- Receiving input

Classic prepress workflow

- Receiving input
- Identifying and sorting input

Classic prepress workflow

- Receiving input
- Identifying and sorting input
- Processing input
 - Preflight, corrections, trapping, imposition, color correction, generating PDF / PostScript / EPS, generating single pages, renaming,...

Classic prepress workflow

- Receiving input
- Identifying and sorting input
- Processing input
 - Preflight, corrections, trapping, imposition, color correction, generating PDF / PostScript / EPS, generating single pages, renaming,...
- Delivering results

Classic prepress workflow

- Receiving input
- Identifying and sorting input
- Processing input
 - Preflight, corrections, trapping, imposition, color correction, generating PDF / PostScript / EPS, generating single pages, renaming,...
- Delivering results
- Handling errors

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Automation

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Defining Automation

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Defining Automation

- “The art of making processes or machines self-acting or self-moving”

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Defining Automation

- “The art of making processes or machines self-acting or self-moving”

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Defining Automation

- “The art of making processes or machines self-acting or self-moving”
- “The replacement of human workers by machines”

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Reasons to Automate?

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Reasons to Automate?

- Improving throughput and thus efficiency

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Reasons to Automate?

- Improving throughput and thus efficiency
- Standardization and thus reduction of errors

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Reasons to Automate?

- Improving throughput and thus efficiency
- Standardization and thus reduction of errors

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Reasons to Automate?

- Improving throughput and thus efficiency
- Standardization and thus reduction of errors
- Allowing people to focus on the intelligent parts of their job

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Workflow Automation

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Definition

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Definition

- “The combination of software, tools and services to automate knowledge-based tasks”

Definition

- “The combination of software, tools and services to automate knowledge-based tasks”

Definition

- “The combination of software, tools and services to automate knowledge-based tasks”
- Sounds simple

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Definition

- “The combination of software, tools and services to automate knowledge-based tasks”
- Sounds simple
- So why don't more companies automate their workflow?

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Common Misconceptions

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It's too difficult for me

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It's too difficult for me

- *You're smarter than you think...*

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It's too difficult for me

- *You're smarter than you think...*
- Get help
 - Web (user forums, email groups...)
 - Take advantage of standards (such as those of the GWG)
 - Use system integrators and VARs

It's too difficult for me

- *You're smarter than you think...*
- **Get help**
 - Web (user forums, email groups...)
 - Take advantage of standards (such as those of the GWG)
 - Use system integrators and VARs
- **Start small...**

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It's all or nothing

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It's all or nothing

- *Every small bit counts...*

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It's all or nothing

- *Every small bit counts...*
- Start small, pick “low-hanging fruit”

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It's all or nothing

- *Every small bit counts...*
- Start small, pick “low-hanging fruit”
- Use initial gains to
 - Fund further automation
 - Ensure “buy-in” from key people

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It's all or nothing

- *Every small bit counts...*
- Start small, pick “low-hanging fruit”
- Use initial gains to
 - Fund further automation
 - Ensure “buy-in” from key people
- The benefits start long before you've solved “the whole problem”

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I can't afford it

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I can't afford it

- *Let it pay for itself...*

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I can't afford it

- *Let it pay for itself...*
- Start small...

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I can't afford it

- *Let it pay for itself...*
- Start small...
- Even replacing small manual tasks of a couple of minutes per day, can lead to big gains.

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I can't afford it

- *Let it pay for itself...*
- Start small...
- Even replacing small manual tasks of a couple of minutes per day, can lead to big gains.
- Do an honest Return on Investment calculation.

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My workflow is special

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My workflow is special

- *Sure it is...*

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My workflow is special

- *Sure it is...*
- Every workflow has “special” parts, but many parts are probably very common.

My workflow is special

- *Sure it is...*
- Every workflow has “special” parts, but many parts are probably very common.
- And when it’s special... make sure you have chosen a technology that can make it easy to automate those bits as well.



Workflow Automation Options

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Do Nothing

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Do Nothing

- Can be a very smart option

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Do Nothing

- Can be a very smart option
- Automation costs time to implement

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Do Nothing

- Can be a very smart option
- Automation costs time to implement
- Not every workflow or every function in a workflow will return a benefit from automation

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Do Nothing

- Can be a very smart option
- Automation costs time to implement
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Do Nothing

- Can be a very smart option
- Automation costs time to implement
- Not every workflow or every function in a workflow will return a benefit from automation
- But make informed decisions!

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Do-It-Yourself

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Do-It-Yourself

- Using chained, hot folder driven applications, spiced up with a touch of scripting

Do-It-Yourself

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Do-It-Yourself

- Pro:
 - Need in-house or purchased expertise to create and maintain
 - Highly customizable
 - Get to decide which tools to use

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Do-It-Yourself

- **Pro:**
 - Need in-house or purchased expertise to create and maintain
 - Highly customizable
 - Get to decide which tools to use
- **Con:**
 - Need to decide which tools to use
 - Costly to maintain or update
 - Hard to track jobs and errors

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Vendor Systems

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Vendor Systems

- A workflow system developed by one vendor which has built-in technology servicing a substantial part of a typical prepress workflow

Vendor Systems

- A workflow system developed by one vendor which has built-in technology servicing a substantial part of a typical prepress workflow
- Examples:
 - Agfa Apogee X
 - Kodak Prinergy
 - ...

Vendor Systems

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Vendor Systems

- Pro:
 - Built-in technology integrated, certified to work together

Vendor Systems

- Pro:
 - Built-in technology integrated, certified to work together
- Con:
 - Often cannot easily change components, technology is updated slowly
 - Price point sometimes too high
 - Can require changing complete way of working

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Automation Systems

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Automation Systems

- Applications to visually define and control do-it-yourself workflows

Automation Systems

- Applications to visually define and control do-it-yourself workflows
- Examples:
 - Markzware FlightCheck Workflow
 - Enfocus PitStop Automate
 - Gradual SWITCH

Automation Systems

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Automation Systems

- Pro:
 - Highly flexible, both in how a workflow can be organized and in the technology used
 - Easy to setup and maintain
 - Affordable

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Automation Systems

- Pro:
 - Highly flexible, both in how a workflow can be organized and in the technology used
 - Easy to setup and maintain
 - Affordable
- Con:
 - Typically does not include all functions of a vendor system

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No Single Best Buy

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No Single Best Buy

- What to do depends largely on what you want / need

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No Single Best Buy

- What to do depends largely on what you want / need
- Different options may very well be used together



ROI

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Can I make Money?

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Can I make Money?

- How do I calculate whether what I want to do will actually make me money?

Can I make Money?

- How do I calculate whether what I want to do will actually make me money?
- How much do I need to automate to make it worthwhile?

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ROI Example

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ROI Example

- A fictitious company called AdsForYou
 - Mid-size
 - Provides design & prepress services

ROI Example

- A fictitious company called AdsForYou
 - Mid-size
 - Provides design & prepress services
- Needs automation
 - Decides to implement an automation system
 - Wants a phased implementation

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Assumptions

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Assumptions

- 25€ total hourly cost per employee in production

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Assumptions

- 25€ total hourly cost per employee in production
- 30 jobs per day across the company
 - reception
 - preflight, touch-up, color-correction
 - PDF creation
 - image optimization

AdsForYou: Caveat

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AdsForYou: Caveat

- This example shows ROI for a typical automation system.
 - Savings side will be largely the same for a do-it-yourself or vendor system
 - Cost side might (and probably will be) very different for those solutions

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Implementation Phases

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Implementation Phases

- **Phase 1**
Focuses on receiving files and sorting them (could be on file type, sender, file name...)

Implementation Phases

- **Phase 1**
Focuses on receiving files and sorting them (could be on file type, sender, file name...)
- **Phase 2**
Focuses on processing files (preflight, color correction, generating low-res images...)



Phase 1

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Automation Goals

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Automation Goals

- Automated tasks
 - File reception
 - Sorting and renaming incoming files
 - Providing feedback to clients
 - Archiving jobs

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Automation Goals

- Automated tasks
 - File reception
 - Sorting and renaming incoming files
 - Providing feedback to clients
 - Archiving jobs
- Savings
 - 10 minutes per job

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Implementation

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Implementation

- An example using Gradual SWITCH

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Costs

Item	Cost
Purchase of the appropriate software	900 €
Implementation	1000 €
Total Cost	1900 €

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Return on Investment

Phase 1 Summary	
Implementation costs	1.900 €
Monthly cost savings	2.500 €
Return on investment after	1 month
Total savings during the first year	28.100 €

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Phase 2

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Automation Goals

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Automation Goals

- Additional automated tasks
 - Creation of low resolution previews
 - Preflighting InDesign files
 - Creating and preflighting PDF files
 - Uploading finished jobs to the publisher

Automation Goals

- **Additional automated tasks**
 - Creation of low resolution previews
 - Preflighting InDesign files
 - Creating and preflighting PDF files
 - Uploading finished jobs to the publisher
- **Additional savings**
 - An additional 7 minutes per job

Implementation

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Implementation

- An example using Gradual SWITCH

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Costs

Item	Cost
Purchase of the appropriate software	9.960 €
Implementation	2.000 €
Total Cost	11.960 €

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Return on Investment

Phase 2 Summary	
Implementation costs	11.960 €
Monthly cost savings	1.750 €
Return on investment after	7 months
Total savings during the first year	9.040 €

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Total ROI

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Return of Investment

AdsForYou Summary	
Implementation costs	13.860 €
Monthly cost savings	4.250 €
Return on investment after	3 months
Total savings during the first year	37.140 €

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Automation Bonus...

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Automation Bonus...

- Calculates direct cost-savings

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Automation Bonus...

- Calculates direct cost-savings
- Automation also:
 - Standardizes production work
 - Reduces human errors
 - Lets people work at their pay-grade
 - Frees up resources for customer interaction

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