

QuarkCopyDesk brings success almost overnight

Solutions for Sales Limited, a sales and marketing consultancy based in the UK, produces high-impact sales tools for major international players in the high-tech, software, and telecom markets. With a growing client base built on their reputation for producing very high-quality sales material, the company needed to slash the time and costs involved in review cycles without compromising quality. With a minimal investment in QuarkCopyDesk®, Solutions for Sales realized a 200% gain in productivity — almost overnight.

“Using QuarkCopyDesk, we were able to deliver two projects to a client in less time than it took to deliver one using the old methods,” said Robert Blair, Solutions for Sales client director. By incorporating QuarkCopyDesk into its publishing workflow, Blair said the company was able to increase productivity in its review cycle and save upwards of £3,000 per project in production costs. With each client director running between 6 and 12 projects a year, the savings were significant.

“QuarkCopyDesk started as a solo effort by a client director [who was] seeking to complete change requests in a shorter time than the old process allowed,” said Blair. When that director reported dramatic productivity gains, Solutions for Sales decided to build its editorial processes around QuarkCopyDesk.

Tedious review cycles leave room for error

The old publishing process at Solutions for Sales was based on Microsoft® Word and required a tedious corrections and proofing process. The company composed its copy in Word, flowed the text into QuarkXPress Passport® layouts, and distributed PDFs to 10 or more client stakeholders for review. The client submitted comments by voice, e-mail messages, or PDF to client delivery managers, who compiled them into annotated PDFs. A graphic designer then entered changes from the PDF into the QuarkXPress Passport layouts, and the client delivery manager proofed the changes. Each team repeated this review cycle two or three times per project, spending many, many hours to approve one layout. Text was trapped in QuarkXPress Passport, and the client director depended on the graphic designers to make the editorial changes. The entire process left too much room for error.

“The amount of mouse-based highlighting and commenting that had to be gone through just to create the annotated PDF has to be seen to be believed,” said Blair. “With QuarkCopyDesk, this whole manual phase in the production cycle is eliminated, so the client director can spend more time on the content and add more value for the client. As a result production quality is improved and turn-round is faster.”

QuarkCopyDesk ensures fit and formatting

Since the move to QuarkCopyDesk, the client delivery manager writes or edits the copy to fit in QuarkCopyDesk — taking advantage of the shared text

composition and hyphenation engine in QuarkXPress Passport and QuarkCopyDesk. The QuarkCopyDesk files are flowed into QuarkXPress Passport layouts the same way the Word files used to be, but the text is guaranteed to fit.

“As an alternative, we trialed letting our clients use Word to provide their edits, but this often lead to lots of extra pages being added during the review cycle, diluting the impact and relevance of the finished document,” said Blair. “By not using a Word-based review process, we avoid verbosity and unnecessary production work.”

Although the company still distributes PDFs for review, the client delivery managers have improved significantly the way they handle the comments. Rather than compiling comments into an annotated PDF, client delivery managers simply make decisions and enter changes in the QuarkCopyDesk files. The text retains all of its formatting, and it still fits in the same space in the layout. All the graphic designer needs to do is update the QuarkXPress Passport files and generate new PDFs to initiate the next review cycle.

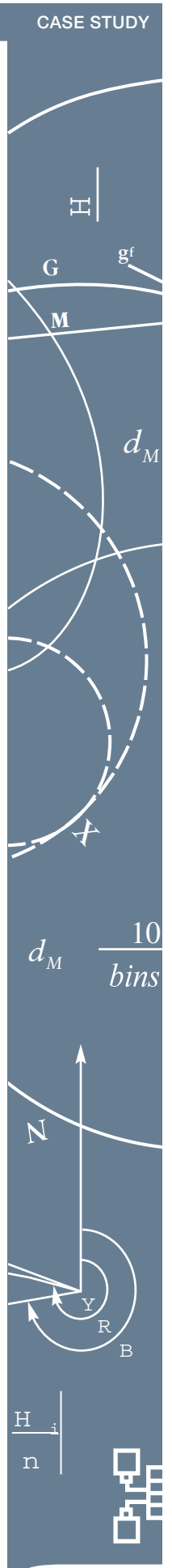
“Our client managers have to umpire all the changes and meet exacting deadlines,” said Blair. “If you have to do one of our documents over four months, Word is fine. If you have to do one a month, think again.”

For Blair, the switch to QuarkCopyDesk means that client delivery managers can implement all of their client’s change requests, maintain production quality, and manage the copy’s space and word budget more effectively.

Better fit means smarter content

According to Blair, writing copy to fit in QuarkCopyDesk improves the content itself.

“Using QuarkCopyDesk and QuarkXPress Passport, we are able to produce high-impact documents that our clients’ sales forces find are easy to read. They learn more about the subjects, and this helps them do their jobs better,” said Blair. Clients of Solutions for Sales — including companies such as Advantica, Amdocs, Cramer Systems, Intervice, and Nortel Networks — don’t just take the word of Solutions for Sales representatives that smarter content produces more effective sales tools. Solutions for Sales surveys its clients’ salespeople to test their reaction to the sales pitches, and it interviews its clients’ executive staff members.





“Our clients’ executive management find that they see a significant improvement in the job performance of the staff that receive our documents,” said Blair. “These are salespeople in the high-tech software world, where deals are measured in millions. This can have a huge effect on our client’s business. Helping their staff win a deal they did not expect to get more than pays for their investment with us.”

QuarkCopyDesk means benefits at lower cost

Of course, producing clear, concise content in QuarkCopyDesk for clients increases business for Solutions for Sales. And gains in productivity help control costs.

“Using QuarkCopyDesk over Word, we are able to deliver these benefits to more customers and do more projects for each customer without our production costs going up,” said Blair.

“Our client directors are senior and experienced people with significant industry knowledge,” said Blair. “Anything that saves them time enables us to handle more business and generate more revenue. Also, faster turnaround times mean faster results for our clients and improved cash flow for us.”

Solutions for Sales Limited

Founded in 2000, Solutions for Sales Limited specialises in producing tools and materials that help salespeople sell more effectively. The company employs 15 people, including senior sales professionals who work with and advise clients and back-office staff for page layout, Web design, and administration. The company is based just outside London and has remote offices distributed throughout the UK. For more information about Solutions for Sales Limited, visit the company’s Web site at www.solutionsforsales.com.

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