

The Transpromo Game, Interview with John Cloutier, CEO, DMM, Inc.

By WhatTheyThink Staff

January 28th, 2009 -- DMM, Inc. was founded in 1983 and is a second generation, 25 year old privately held direct marketing solutions company located in Scarborough, ME. John V. Cloutier is the President and CEO of the company. As an end-to-end solutions provider, DMM specializes in transactional documents and digital print production and offers 1:1 communications, cross-media programs as well as web-to-print solutions and data analytics. The DMM facilities occupy 175,000 square feet and include direct mail and digital print production and fulfillment centers.



WTT: What are the challenges with implementing a transpromo strategy?

JC: We are focused on developing technology solutions such as Transpromo Communications and with that comes the challenge of educating the client. This also requires a paradigm shift on a better and new way of conducting business. As a marketing solutions provider our biggest challenge is to find out what areas of the country we want to focus on targeting. Since we are in the early adoption stage of the Transpromo industry - our biggest challenge is how to educate and sell at the same time.

WTT: Where do you see the biggest opportunities in transpromo?

JC: We have high expectations because of where we have chosen to focus. The types of communications we are focused on are the communications that have to be sent due to a client's business model. We are focused on client companies whereby their business model encompasses sending communications such as statements, invoices, newsletters and automated and marketing collateral to sales representatives. Developing relevant data driven communications across all mediums is where we are focused.

More specifically, our push into Transpromo Communications is our area of greatest opportunity. And it is all tied to the data. We utilize data analytic strategies to fine-tune the development of our Transpromo Programs. Recently we became SAS 70 Certified and are excited about the opportunities that go along with that especially in the financial services and insurance industries.

WTT: How do you think the economy will do and what strategies can printers take to guard against further economic weakness?

JC: As far as the economy is concerned, I think we are all taking a wait and see attitude. On the manufacturing side we are a digital shop with an array of digital equipment and our strategy is to add value by customizing solutions that utilize our data analytic capabilities. This is where printers can uncover opportunities – the data is where it all begins. We started out as a data service bureau not a commercial printer and we have found that this has helped us tremendously. Even if the data side is not a core competency for a printer, then find strategic partners that can assist you in developing value by utilizing data analytics.

WTT: Has your company implemented any environmental initiatives?

JC: One of the greatest things going on in our industry is FSC Certification and the wind power energy efforts programs. We have implemented several smart environmental initiatives and will continue to do so. I think you have start somewhere and do what you have the capability to do with the resources you have. Many programs take time and money but there are definitely opportunities for everyone to contribute in many ways. Being good stewards of the environment that supports our businesses is a much needed practice.

WTT: DMM is known as a 100% digital facility. Tell us about your equipment.

JC: We recently just completed our second Xerox iGen3 Installation. We also have 4 Xerox DocuPrint 125 MX MICR Cut-Sheet Printers as well as 1 Océ 2140 Continuous Laser Printer and an Océ 744 Twin Duplex Continuous Print System. We have made major investments in the past year in the acquisition of GMC Communications Suite PrintNetT as well as data analytics packages. We also recently invested in the development of a web-based fulfillment program with online reporting and tractability. Digital technologies have liberated our business and opened up more doors than we could ever have imagined. There are no boundaries in conducting business.

WTT: Tell us about your customers and some of the challenges they have presented to you.

JC: The biggest challenges for our customers is getting maximum value for the dollars they spend on marketing and being able to track and demonstrate ROI on their investment. Our clients want to know how they can get the most out of their marketing dollars. The key is tracking. Our clients are also looking at service providers like us to bring them innovative solutions.