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CASE STUDY

CRAFTS/TEXTILE INDUSTRY

William Briggs & Company

Crafting new business processes

CHALLENGE

- Needed to physically manage large inventory of paper-based needlepoint, cross stitch, tapestry, and embroidery patterns
- Needed a more efficient way for employees to locate the multipage paper patterns and assemble them into kits
- Needed a way to preserve quality and usability of pattern masters over time
- Using an analog copier to copy pattern masters was time consuming and had to be constantly monitored

STRATEGY

- Installed eCopy ShareScan® on a networked digital copier
- Utilized eCopy Quick Connect™ to scan multipage pattern masters into PDF documents that could be integrated directly into their electronic library
- Converted pattern masters into electronic files for easy retrieval

RESULTS

- Eliminated need for physically archiving and handling aging pattern masters
- Significantly increased employee productivity and efficiency by converting paper-based workflow into an automated digital process
- Accessing patterns from electronic library allowed for higher quality output and printing on demand
- Lowered operating costs by enabling a more efficient manufacturing process and reducing time to assemble kits

ABOUT WILLIAM BRIGGS & COMPANY

Coats plc, the parent company of William Briggs & Company, is a worldwide industrial thread making company with 35,000 people in 68 countries and a crafts presence across 38 countries. The company initially became famous for traced linens and heat transfer printing onto coats of arms and military badges for war veterans who were rehabilitating after the First World War. Coats' also became well known for their embroidery and needlepoint kits with brands such as Penelope, Anchor and Fleur de Lis. Founded in 1874, William Briggs is Coats' specialist printing and kit making operation. Today William Briggs produces tapestry wool and needlework kits for Coats companies around the world.

"When we looked to buy a new printer, we were given the option to have eCopy with it. I saw the immediate benefit of scanning the archive of patterns and doing away with our physical masters."

— **Andrew Sunderland**
Operations Manager
William Briggs & Company

WITH A LARGE LIBRARY OF PAPER - BASED NEEDLEPOINT, CROSS STITCH, TAPESTRY , AND EMBROIDERY PATTERNS ...

The library typically contains 800 active patterns, with about 250 new patterns introduced each year, and another 250 discontinued annually. The company assembles patterns into kits with all the materials necessary to create the needlework piece, and distributes the kits through its crafting channels worldwide. Kit assembly required employees to locate the paper pattern master in the hardcopy library—generally produced on A3 paper and often consisting of multiple pages—and copy the pattern for insertion into the kit. As pattern masters age, they deteriorate in quality and usability, becoming dog-eared and smudged over time, resulting in degradation of quality. Additionally, the process of locating the paper master in the library was time consuming, taking 2-3 minutes per pattern. And the copying process, conducted using an analog copier, had to be constantly supervised.

William Briggs & Company Case Study

“eCopy has enabled us to convert a laborious manual process into an automated digital process that saves us time and money, whilst converting the archiving and retrieval of documents to a more fluid workflow.”

— **Andrew Sunderland**
Operations Manager
William Briggs & Company

THEY WERE LOOKING FOR A SOLUTION THAT WOULD COMBINE PRINT AND SCAN PATTERN MASTERS INTO A COMMON REPOSITORY ...

In addition to utilizing the library of paper pattern masters, William Briggs has a library of electronic patterns, and employees must manage both libraries in production of the kits. The company was looking for a solution that would allow it to print electronic patterns and scan paper masters from the library into a common repository for higher quality output and a more efficient manufacturing process.

By adding eCopy to a network connected Canon copier, not only was William Briggs able to directly print electronic patterns, but it could also scan hardcopy patterns from the paper library to a digital format. Using Quick Connect, files are scanned to PDF, named according to standardized naming conventions and placed in an appropriate subfolder for easy retrieval and printing on demand.

In addition, the establishment of an integrated electronic library of patterns will allow William Briggs to make its electronic library available to sales partners and even end customers as it develops new programs in the future.

WITH A CONSOLIDATED LIBRARY, LOCATING PATTERNS FOR PRODUCTION TAKES SECONDS...

According to Andrew Sunderland, Operations Manager, “With a consolidated library, locating patterns for production takes seconds rather than minutes. Additionally, we are able to queue up multiple jobs for printing, reducing the amount of labor we previously devoted to operating an analog copying system, since the analog copiers did not permit queuing of jobs.”

Sunderland is pleased with the increased product quality as well as the simplicity of using eCopy. He adds, “We have benefited from significant gains in productivity and improvements in quality since we implemented eCopy. Our new digital workflow has made us more efficient than ever before and we are consuming much less space with storage of paper patterns.”

“eCopy has enabled us to convert a laborious manual process into an automated digital process that saves us time and money, whilst converting the archiving and retrieval of documents to a more fluid workflow. Our integrated digital library will eliminate the need to handle aging paper patterns, and the ability to queue digital files for printing makes our staff more productive.”

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