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	Size	Quantity	Item Price	Total
2nd Color Choice				

☐ Express Delivery
(for orders placed by 12pm EST)
Add \$9.00 to standard
Next Day Service:
Add \$17.00 to standard

Standard Ground Shipping (2-6 day delivery)	Please Add
Merchandise Total	
\$0-\$50	\$7.50
\$51-100	\$8.50
\$101-150	\$9.50
\$151-200	\$10.50
\$201-300	\$12.50
\$301-400	\$15.50
	\$18.50

Merchandise Subtotal
*Sales Tax (see note)
Standard Ground Shipping
Express Delivery
Order Total \$

*Note: For delivery to CA, CT, LA, MA, MD, MN, NC, NJ, NY, TX, VA and WA add all sales tax.



HOW TO:

STREAMLINE THE CONTENT PRODUCTION PROCESS

Looking to increase your sales, reduce costs and improve the team's morale? Who isn't?

Creating a more efficient work process for producing your catalogs, website content and marketing vehicles can help. In most companies today, resources are squandered and creative energy is zapped because of last-minute directional changes and incessant rework.

Here's a guide to creating a work process that can improve productivity and the quality of your marketing vehicle—and, ultimately, your bottom line.

✓ IDENTIFY ALL THE STEPS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE PROJECT.

Formulate task durations and establish an overall timeline.

✓ CALL OUT KEY TOUCHPOINTS.

These are places where collaboration and information exchange between marketing, merchandising, creative and the executive team should take place.

Schedule these touchpoints as face-to-face meetings. Emailing comments around the office is neither collaborative nor an efficient way to exchange ideas. Even a 10-minute meeting is more productive than attempting to manage various email strings and then glean and distribute direction.

✓ CREATE A GUIDE FOR EACH MEETING BETWEEN TEAMS.

Outline the following: owner (who's running the meeting), objective, duration, attendees, input (what information people will bring to the meeting), activities (who presents what) and output (agreements, direction, etc.). The kick-off meeting is your chance to collaborate

with your partners and create the most relevant and productive presentation for the customer.

Be clear on what's expected regarding input and output of these meetings. For example, the input for the kick-off meeting should include all product information and marketing offers, and a creative framework. Agreements on offer positioning, product attributes and possible presentation tactics should be included in the output.

✓ GET TOP-DOWN SUPPORT.

The best way to get buy-in and meaningful dialogue going between departments is a mandate from top management that a process overhaul is needed. You must get this support for the process model before presenting to the teams. If the initiative is deemed a priority by the boss, it keeps everyone from denying change is needed and people will get on board.

✓ DEFINE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

Delineation of responsibility needs to be clear for any inter-departmental work process to be effective. Everyone must be accountable for their assigned roles and not dispense advice willy-nilly across functional areas; this will only distract from the agreed upon strategy. That said, providing an opportunity for ideas to be heard from all contributors is important and should be accommodated in a way that doesn't derail the process or create a missed opportunity to leverage a new idea.

✓ SET GOALS FOR IMPLEMENTATION.

Agree on a date when or a specific project where the new process will be fully adopted. It may take months before all the areas can get far enough ahead to meet the required dates and provide the essential input for meetings. Adjustments in everyone's work styles may have to be made to support the new process as well. Creating an implementation timeline and marking progress will ensure the initiative doesn't get pushed to the back burner.—NEAL SCHULER, principal, Schuler Creative Consulting

TIP:

Use Data to Stay Relevant

COUNTRY CURTAINS WAS "WOEFULLY UNPREPARED" FOR THE RECENT RECESSION. The hous-

ing depression struck when home sales peaked in 2006, and then stuck at lower levels.

The Stockbridge, MA-based domestics cataloger/retailer saw about a 15% decline in sales from 2008 to 2010, said Phil McAvoy, president of the Stockbridge, MA firm, speaking at NEMOA. Worse yet, the price of cotton rose 300%—after holding steady for about 20 years.

Since McAvoy arrived at Country Curtains in 2008, "we've been fine-tuning the brand," he noted. "We had to make sure our brands were on target all the time because tweaking the brand can be tricky."

A huge advantage for the merchant is that "we capture almost all retail transactions with a name and address," McAvoy said. Country Curtains boasts a 99% capture rate.

How does it manage this? Store managers receive incentives based on capture rates, McAvoy said.

While Country Curtains had "tons of data," it needed a strong partner to turn it into an actionable database. (It found one in digital marketing agency SolutionSet.) "We try to learn more about our customers every week and every month," McAvoy said.

Product and lifestyle targeting is a recent focus for Country Curtains, McAvoy added. "We reviewed 10 years' worth of purchasing history, along with unique product and style preferences."

The merchant tracks strategy, people and process all the time, focusing a great deal on process, he said. "You have to address these and fix them and move on. We learn more from our mistakes than our successes."

No matter how well the business is doing, multichannel merchants should always have five or six new business initiatives "in the hopper," McAvoy said. Because if just one of them works, it can help invigorate the brand.

"Our biggest benefit is our equity in the brand and customer loyalty that has built up," he said. If you want to succeed, "continue to make your brand relevant."—JT

