

Adobe® Acrobat®

SOS Printing

Leading Australian prepress and print service provider improves operations and print quality with Adobe Acrobat 5.0 and Adobe PDF

ABOUT THE CUSTOMER

- Full-service prepress and print service provider
- Employees: 130
- Headquarters: Sydney, Australia

BENEFITS SUMMARY

- Adobe Acrobat 5.0 allows SOS Printing to export text and images in archived Adobe PDF files to JPEG and RTF, simplifying the reuse of materials for future client projects.
- Acrobat 5.0 support for XML speeds SOS Printing's production of time-sensitive financial reports.
- The integration of JavaScript capabilities enables SOS Printing to create more dynamic applications utilizing Adobe PDF forms and database information.
- The Press Optimize option in Acrobat helps ensure that SOS Printing customers choose the best settings and don't omit fonts.
- Compact, platform- and application-independent Adobe PDF files can be archived on SOS Printing's Web server for reliable on-demand printing.

www.sos.com.au

SOS Printing is one of Australia's leading full-service prepress and print service bureaus, producing everything from financial reports for brokers to marketing collateral for Australia's largest companies. To expand customer services and respond to increasing client demand for rapid production—print jobs completed and delivered in hours instead of days—SOS Printing continually adopts advanced technologies. Two tools that are integral to the company's success are Adobe Acrobat software and Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF), which support SOS Printing in the move to faster, more efficient operations.

With Adobe Acrobat, SOS Printing can instantly create electronic job tickets and streamline direct computer-to-plate printing workflows. New features in Acrobat 5.0 further automate operations by supporting XML and JavaScript applications and allowing SOS staff and clients to comment on draft materials online. "Acrobat 5.0 offers a solid foundation for improving processes," says Michael Schulz, art director at SOS Printing. "We can enhance the quality of our operations and the final documents that we deliver to customers."

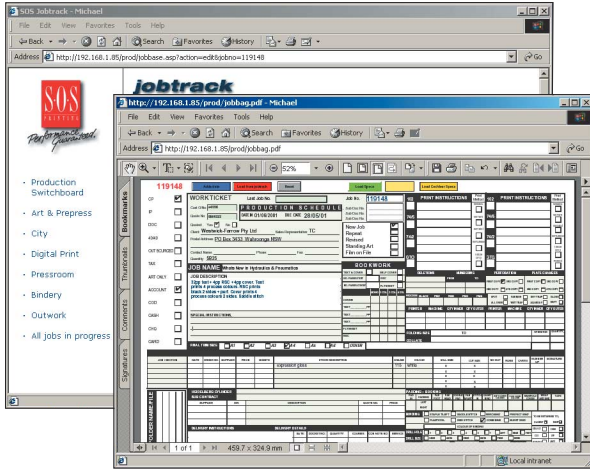
QUALITY UP, COSTS DOWN

As SOS's experience demonstrates, the cost of success doesn't have to be high. By creating job tickets using forms in Adobe PDF, SOS can handle more jobs, more efficiently than ever. Standard job templates exist in Adobe PDF on the company's server. As new jobs come in, employees open the forms in Adobe PDF and enter job specifications, such as color or black-and-white, type of printer required, and completion date in form fields. The information is then saved in a database and can be reviewed in Adobe PDF by other SOS employees as jobs progress.

"The savings have been enormous," Schulz says. "Our volume of print jobs has increased fourfold over the past few years. Without Adobe Acrobat and Adobe PDF, it would be almost impossible to track on paper all the information associated with these jobs. The Adobe Acrobat 5.0 software allows us to automatically populate job tickets with instructions that are stored in our database and lets us better manage this information."

THE NEXT STEP IN INTEGRATION

The tight integration of Acrobat 5.0 with JavaScript and the software's enhanced sup-



With Adobe Acrobat 5.0 software, SOS Printing can automatically populate its job tickets, which are Adobe PDF forms, with instructions from a backend database. JavaScript applications can be developed that closely link client materials with instructions on job tickets in Adobe PDF.

“We’re missing something in about 90% of the native application files that we receive,” says Schulz. “The Press Optimize feature in Acrobat eliminates these oversights and saves us considerable time and money. We estimate that roughly 25% of prepress time is spent cleaning up client mistakes, and it’s nearly impossible to recoup these losses.”

port for XML help SOS Printing deploy even more dynamic applications, particularly those that better support customers in the fast-paced financial services industry. JavaScript applications can be developed that closely link client materials with instructions on job tickets, which are Adobe PDF forms, helping ensure that printed materials are processed accordingly. As the popularity of XML grows as a data exchange format, SOS Printing can incorporate it into its Acrobat based workflow.

For example, financial houses can send SOS Printing information in XML that must be processed and printed in reports within hours of receipt. By taking advantage of the improved XML support in Adobe Acrobat 5.0, SOS Printing can link XML data to Adobe PDF templates that are formatted to match the exact requirements of financial reports. “With Acrobat 5.0, we can take the XML data we receive from brokerage houses at 2 A.M. and produce quality financial reports by 6 A.M. that day.”

A POWERFUL ARCHIVING TOOL

Many SOS Printing jobs are from repeat customers, so easy access to instructions and client files from previous print jobs can greatly shorten the time it takes to complete

new projects. Adobe PDF comes through on both fronts. Automatic placement of database information in job ticket forms in Adobe PDF eliminates unnecessary administrative tasks. SOS client projects that are archived as platform- and application-independent Adobe PDF files provide a reliable reference library of materials.

Acrobat 5.0 brings archiving in Adobe PDF to a whole new level. Text and images in Adobe PDF files can be exported quickly to other popular formats, such as RTF, JPEG, and PNG. Explains Schulz, “If we need only part of a client document from a previous job, we can export it and work with it in another format before converting it back to Adobe PDF for printing. The ability to export documents in Adobe PDF to other formats makes Adobe PDF the most versatile format for archiving documents.”

ACCURATE PRINTING THE FIRST TIME

For years, SOS Printing has encouraged customers to submit print jobs in Adobe PDF; the compact files contain everything—fonts, photos, captions, and logos—that SOS needs to print jobs correctly on the first try. In contrast, materials submitted in native applications, such as QuarkXPress and Microsoft Word, frequently are incomplete.

INCREASED CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

The ability of Adobe PDF to support on-demand printing has allowed SOS Printing to go beyond traditional, large-volume print runs and handle much smaller jobs. As a result, customer jobs that were once impractical for SOS Printing can now be handled easily.

Concludes Schulz, “Acrobat 5.0 and Adobe PDF open up new possibilities for our clients and us. The tools speed publishing in the time-sensitive financial sector, reduce missing elements in files for magazine publishing, and increase customer satisfaction by letting us collaborate more closely with clients to speed the production of quality materials.”

TOOLKIT

Software

- Adobe Acrobat
- Adobe Illustrator®
- Adobe PageMaker®
- Adobe Photoshop®

Hardware

- PCs
- Apple Macintosh computers
- Scitex Brisque Impose
- Scitex Brisque Proof
- Dolev 800 imagesetter
- Iris Realist digital proofer
- Scitex Spontane color laser printer
- Xerox 40/40 color laser printer
- Xerox DocuTech 6135 and 6180
- Production Publisher printers
- Several Heidelberg two- to five-color presses