

Perceived Satisfaction by Customers in the Digital Printing Value System

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Extended Abstract

The objective of this article is to study how customers to digital printing houses experience the value received from digital printed matters. The focus of the study is to investigate how customers carried through internal and external changes to profit from the advantages of digital printing. Both professional customers, i.e. advertising agencies, and non-professional customers, i.e. direct customers, to digital printing houses have participated in the study.

In this qualitative case study 12 companies have been investigated and 8 focused interviews have been conducted to gain deeper knowledge of the behavior behind the strategy in the studied companies. A survey was also carried out involving all 12 participating companies. In this survey the respondents graded their general demands on printed material and their satisfaction with digital printing according to the critical success factors - price, time, functionality, and quality. Based on the assumption that it is not possible to, realistically, have high demands on all critical success factors and that there has to be some tradeoff between them, the factors have been summarized and compared using mean-centered values.

The study concludes that the use of applications like print-on-demand was one of the main reasons why customers engaged in digital printing in the first place. This application is still today what customers make most use of in digital printing, even though some customers believe that they benefit from solutions involving variable data printing.

Among the critical success factors mentioned earlier, *quality* was the factor that customers deemed most important. This was also the factor that they were least satisfied with in relation to their needs. *Time* was the only factor that the customers were more than satisfied with. Also, the customers in general were quite *price* insensitive, which is a result of the fierce price competition in the printing industry that keeps the general price level low. Customers that utilized more complex applications like variable data printing and web-to-print were

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more satisfied with the price than those using basic applications like print-on-demand. Regarding the *functionality* of digital printing the respondents were divided in different groups. The advertising agencies did not feel that the functionality met their needs, while direct customers were satisfied with the functionality.

In respect to all four critical success factors, it was concluded that digital printing does not fully fulfill the demands that customers put on their printed material. But it was also indicated that digital printing is becoming an increasingly important production technology for the respondent's printed matters.