

# Case Study: Bradford University

## The Current Service

Inprint and Design provides design and print services to Bradford University and Bradford College. The company is run by a board of seven members with three representatives from each institution plus the manager. Inprint and Design aims to manage 100% of all design and print for both institutions and to increase external business. The focus for marketing services outside of the two institutions is smaller education colleges, schools and training organisations. Inprint's longer term aim is to provide an educational print hub within the surrounding area and thereby reduce duplicated costs of equipment ownership & staff costs to individual institutions. Any annual profit is gift-aided back. Turnover has grown from £1.1M to £2M in four years. External work has grown from £65K to £270K in the same period.

Recent investments have included a Litho direct imaging chemical free press (Presstek 4 colour DI).

Print Buying is undertaken by the service and approximately £0.5M of print is purchased. The printers deliver direct and provide sample and file copies to Inprint and Design. The administration of this is covered by a handling charge added to the charge made.

## The Journey to the Current Service

Six years ago there were two inplants on the same site located 300 yards apart. One was owned by Bradford University the other by the Bradford FE College. Both needed investment, both cost their institutions money. Service was seen as being good. The College print manager was retiring and the institutions were looking for closer working relationships. A feasibility study suggested that one high quality service for design and print could serve both institutions.

A company was set up in 2002 by the University and suitable premises were found for the extended single service to serve both institutions. It was decided that the company would not employ the staff but that the

staff would be retained by their existing employer (University or College). When a member of staff leaves then they are replaced by their original host institution. There was some adjustment in terms and conditions to bring all staff to the same fair levels.

A loan was provided by both institutions to set up the company to provide suitable accommodation and equipment. Initially the plant included the best of the worst equipment but significant investments have been made since the company started trading.

A lot of work has been put into integrating the two staff groups who did work in very different ways. A traditional "awayday" was less successful than regular briefings and team meetings.

## Positive Messages from this Case Study

This is an example of the sort of joint service that the HE funding bodies are encouraging institutions to consider. The way that the staff of the two services were brought together to create an integrated service has not been easy but has worked. The business-like approach was part of the new service from the start and having a new service created probably facilitated a new approach to work.

## Some Issues

It has been hard to get a commercial attitude to the service. A change in approach has been assisted by the board agreeing to staff bonuses if growth and profit targets were met. In addition individual awards can be made for exceptional performance, attitude and flexibility.

Some problems did occur with inconsistencies in terms and conditions, in particular with the disciplinary procedures varying. As a result, a disciplinary procedure is being developed for the print service.

Traditionally the College print service managed departmental copiers but this did not occur in the University. A review within the University is looking at the issue of departmental copiers and output

management in general. There is a lot of self-interest from individuals and departments in maintaining local services even if these are not cost effective – a very typical scenario found in other case studies.

## Acknowledgement

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