Manning Publications Harnesses Select™ to Manage Initial Print, Reprint, and POD Order Placement, Fulfillment, and Auto-Stock Replenishment Programs

Case Study

Situation (Challenge)

Manning Publications, a large independent publisher of computing technology books and publications, was faced with transitioning all their print and publications services work to a new vendor, when their existing provider closed.

With the transition came the realization that they no longer had an inventory replenishment system, necessary print-on-demand of certain titles, and distribute-and-print system integration.

Manning challenged their new vendor, Sheridan Grand Rapids (GR), with getting them back to their existing breadth of services by developing those services for a smooth and rapid transition.

Solution

Sheridan GR, the incumbent provider, and Sheridan's Pennsylvania (PA) facility, took a collaborative, consultative approach with Manning to create a solution that would deliver on Manning's expectations. The Sheridan PA facility was determined to be the best fit for the work, and a cross-functional transition team was formed.

Sales, customer service, pre-press, technology, and plant managers at both Sheridan GR and Sheridan PA came together to create the transition plan, which they broke down into three components: Warehouse Transition, Title Transfers, and Technology Development. Each team worked concurrently and in constant communication to ensure that the transition was expedient and inclusive of Manning's needs.

Warehouse Transition
The existing Manning fulfillment operation needed to be quickly moved to Sheridan PA – including both physical inventory and racking. Within three days, over a weekend, everything was transferred to the PA facility. Racks and shelves were set up, and inventory was restocked. The Warehouse Transition team—made up of sales, customer service, warehouse operations, plant operations, maintenance, and technology from both Sheridan locations—worked together so that Sheridan PA was able to start filling Manning's warehouse orders immediately.

Title Transfers
All Manning titles needed to be transferred to Sheridan PA. This involved the Sheridan GR team creating a detailed list of the titles, including all associated files and their individual specifications and requirements. All files were then reviewed by both the Sheridan GR and PA teams to ensure that Manning's requirements would be met and that the files would comply with Sheridan PA systems. Processes were developed for loading the titles into the Select Electronic Warehouse (SEW). Representatives from IT, prepress, customer service, sales, and technology comprised this team.

Technology Development
A third team focused on creating the underlying technology and workflows for automation/job creation and established pricing models and invoicing procedures. Sheridan's proprietary Select™ Central Product Management System is the technology that knits all of Manning's process needs together. The technology team presented the solution to Manning,

demonstrating how they could leverage the system for inventory management, auto replenishment, and original print, reprints, and POD orders. Sheridan's technology team worked with Manning's technology team to establish order preparation processes, create proper file formats, and incorporate other requirements such as ASNs (automated shipping notifications). They also established the invoicing process for POD work. Representatives from Sheridan's estimating and billing departments, sales and technology made up this team.

Results

By diligently striving to understand Manning's specific and highly transactional needs at the onset, creating dedicated teams, then employing problem discussion and resolution/solution/avoidance tactics, Sheridan achieved a seamless, smooth transition of Manning's workflows, allowing them to maintain a consistent level of service throughout the transition.

Original print and reprint orders were placed through the Select portal beginning mid-March 2019. Data integration for fulfillment processes (both physical inventory and zero-warehouse POD) was launched in late March. Auto-stock replenishment integration between Sheridan's warehouse and the Select system was established in mid-April.

The Sheridan teams continue to consult with the customer to ensure they have the workflow they desire.

Megan Yockey, Chief Operating Officer of Manning, commented on the transition: "Through thoughtful planning, regular communication, and a willingness to explore and implement custom solutions to Manning's particular problems, Sheridan made what is by nature a disruptive operation as painless as possible. What's more, they have demonstrated an ongoing commitment to improving processes and providing excellent customer care post-transition. We're glad we chose Sheridan for our print and fulfillment needs."

Products and Services Used

- Select™
- Select Electronic Warehouse (SEW)
- Sheridan Print
- Sheridan Fulfillment - Zero-Warehouse POD (endless virtual inventory) and Back-Issue Warehousing (physical inventory)

Company Profiles

MANNING PUBLICATIONS

About Manning

Manning is an independent publisher of computer books and video courses for software developers, engineers, architects, system administrators, managers, and all who are professionally involved with the computer business. Manning also publishes for students and young programmers, including occasionally for children. An entirely virtual organization based on Shelter Island, New York, Manning was established in 1993.
www.manning.com

Sheridan

About Sheridan

Sheridan is a leading provider of print, publishing services, and technology solutions to publishers, associations, university presses, and catalogers. A division of CJK Group, Inc., Sheridan has six U.S.-based production facilities; each location has a market specialty that supports scholarly journals, books, magazines, reprints, or catalogs. Sheridan is also the provider of the scholarly publishing platform, PubFactory.
www.sheridan.com