

VDP Certification

Introduction

Variable Data Printing (VDP) is a new technology that is revolutionizing the way marketing organizations communicate with their customers. The goals are simple: drive profitable growth, reduce costs, and simplify marketing tasks. The more targeted and personalized a campaign, the higher response rates and the Return on Investment (ROI). VDP is the perfect tool to build brand awareness, enter the sales cycle at the right time, capture current sales opportunities, and increase market share.

Fuji Xerox is both a user and supplier of VDP software and understands the difficulties and barriers that printers are experiencing in selling VDP technology to their customers. To help printers overcome these hurdles, Fuji Xerox has implemented the VDP certification program. This is a program targeted at printers and its goal is to both equip the printer with capability to develop and sell VDP technology and also to promote the printer to marketing customers as a competent provider.

Why Certification?

Many in the DM industry are aware of the VDP technology but are reluctant to utilize more than a simple personalized mailing label. To overcome this problem, Fuji Xerox has decided on the direction of the VDP certification. The intent of the program is to provide the advertising industry with a pool of Fuji Xerox equipped Printers that are both competent users of VDP technology and are capable of delivering a personalized direct mail campaign. The program consists of a competency standard and promotion of the accredited partners to the industry.

How Do I Get Certified?

The intent of the VDP Certification program is to make Printers successful providers of VDP technology and financially benefit by capitalizing on the DM generated print clicks. To be successful, the Printer must be capable of promoting, selling and delivering a fully functional direct mail campaign.

To be successful, a printer must understand the entire VDP process, explain the potential ROI and have the technical expertise to develop and run a campaign. The certification process has been designed to ensure that the printer has the capabilities to successfully deliver such a campaign and have the confidence to pursue and accept business.

The certification process has been designed to ensure that only Printers that meet the required level of competency are accredited. The acceptance criteria includes the following:

1. The printer must have purchased one of the three VDP software packages sold by Fuji Xerox – XMPie, PrintShop Mail or Creo Darwin. Although there are significant differences in the provided capabilities, all three packages are very capable of delivering of producing sophisticated direct mailings. It is assumed that the print will also have staff that is fully trained on the use of the selected package.
2. A direct mail campaign requires more than the just the technical aspects of constructing and printing the mail piece. The printer must have strong skills sets to engage the customer and explain the strategy and benefits of the campaign. To provide the printer with these non-traditional print skills, the printer is required to have at least one operator complete the Profit Through Personalization (offered by Fuji Xerox). This CD-based kit has been designed to get the Printer up to speed quickly on VDP technology and application through a mixture of samples and PowerPoint Presentations.
3. To ensure that the Printer is working at a high-level of technical competence and process understanding, the Printer is expected to complete an upfront and annual test of the VDP technology. This will usually be in the form of a presentation to Fuji Xerox of a successfully completed DM campaign that representative of the Printer's VDP work.
4. As this is a Fuji Xerox and not industry certification, Fuji Xerox has stipulated that all Printers seeking certification must own Fuji Xerox production printing equipment. A production printing equipment is a high-speed colour or b/w device that uses an external front end (Fiery, Creo or Fuji Xerox).

What happens after Certification?

Once a partner has achieved certification, Fuji Xerox has the responsibility to promote the partner as a leading VDP practitioner. This is achieved through both specific marketing of the partner and less targeted market education. Fuji Xerox has committed to the following actions:

1. An integrated ongoing communications program using direct marketing and relevant magazines. The intent of this program is to promote both the market awareness of the certification process and the partners that have achieved accredited status.

Figure 1: Sample Magazine Advertisement



2. The printer will be allowed to use the VDP certification seal on stationery and marketing literature.

Figure 2: VDP Certification Seal



3. The printer will have access to all Fuji Xerox VDP marketing materials. This will include case studies, white papers and international experts.
4. The printer will receive invitations to networking, idea-sharing and other VDP related events. These events will be primarily targeted at educating the marketplace to the benefits of VDP and the logistics of a campaign.
5. The printer will have access to additional technical product training provided by Fuji Xerox on supported products. This can be used to train new staff or expand the expertise of a currently trained employee. These training sessions will be provided through the standard Fuji Xerox training facilities.
6. The printer will have limited access to a Fuji Xerox VDP expert to discuss operational issues when running a DM campaign. The intent of this is to provide guidance but actively participate in the DM development or implementation.

