

## ECOMMERCE CREATES CUSTOMER CONNECTIONS SESSION 4

Philip Gaskin, Business Development Channel Manager at XMPie; Felix Blackburn, Canadian Sales Engineer at XMPie; John Conroy, Managing Director at Claremon; and Scott Williams, CEO at Rocket, join Deborah Corn to discuss combining print and eCommerce, growing small businesses through online orders, and the impact that the right kind of marketing asset portal can have at your company.

### Mentioned in This Episode:

- XMPie: <https://www.xmpie.com/>
- <https://youtu.be/qscl4cE88MA>
- <https://www.xmpie.com/products/web-to-print/storeflow/>
- <https://www.xmpie.com/be-adaptable-to-change-with-web-to-print/>
- Philip Gaskin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/philgaskin/>
- Felix Blackburn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/felix-blackburn-1480621/>
- John Conroy: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/john-conroy-print-expert/>
- Claremon: <https://www.claremon.co.uk/>
- Scott Williams: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/scottwilliams16/>
- Rocket: <https://rocket.ink/>
- Deborah Corn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/deborahcorn/>
- Print Media Centr: <https://printmediacentr.com>
- Project Peacock: <https://ProjectPeacock.TV>
- Girls Who Print: <https://girlswhoprint.net>

### [SESSION TRANSCRIPT]

[00:00:00] ANNOUNCER: Welcome to the future of print, from physical to digital, an XMPie Podcast Conference. XMPie is shaping the future of personalization with its award-winning platform to streamline the communications workflow, and put the customer at the heart of the conversation. Wanting an advanced personalization? Take your direct mail into the digital age, offer more from your packaging services, automate your print ordering. We'll cover all that and more. We hope you enjoy the show. Now, over to our conference host, the intergalactic ambassador to the Printerverse, Deborah Corn.

### [EPISODE]

[00:00:42] DC: Hey, everybody. This is Deborah Corn, your intergalactic ambassador to the Printerverse. Welcome to Podcasts from the Printerverse, and more specifically, the

XMPie Podcast Conference. XMPie is the leading provider of software for cross media, variable data one-to-one marketing, and they offer solutions to help businesses create, and manage highly effective direct marketing. and cross media campaigns. Hopefully, you've listened to the other three episodes of this conference. This is the fourth in the series of four. Although this is our last conversation, to me, this topic is truly the first step in a customer convenience strategy. And of course, I am speaking about ecommerce, web to print, online ordering, whatever you want to call it, you need it. Let me reiterate. You need it. Our podcast guests are experts in the field. Please welcome Phil Gaskin, the Business Development Channel Manager for UK, Ireland, Middle East at XMPie. And Felix Blackburn, the Canadian Sales Engineer at XMPie. Welcome, gentlemen.

[00:01:54] FB: That was a great introduction. Thank you, Deb.

[00:01:57] DC: Thank you. You see, the Canadians, they're always so nice. Can you let everybody know a little bit about what you do at XMPie and a little bit about yourself?

[00:02:06] PG: Yeah. Thanks, Deborah. I've been at XMPie now for nine years, and I've worked in the print industry for over 30 years. My role is predominantly technical sales and channel management, as you said, across the UK, Ireland, and the Middle East. But my passion is helping companies adopt software to grow revenues, and save costs. I really love the diversity of our customers, and the range of products, and services that they offer across different industries. Over the years, I'm proud to have played a part in helping customers change the way that they work, and to see them use a software to actually become an integral part of their business processes.

[00:02:38] DC: And you have a customer here with you today, but we're going to keep that secret for the moment, so people can wait just a few more minutes and hear who's on the podcast with us. Felix, please share a little bit about you, and your role as the Sales Engineer for XMPie?

[00:02:54] FB: Thank you, Deb. I've been in the business for probably 35 years. All of my working career has been in print. About 10 years ago, I decided to have my own print company and decided to offer the web to print. However, I tried to beat the big guys, I tried to beat the Vistaprint of this world, and that didn't turn out very well. I turned into the web ecommerce side of the business, and has been playing out very well for me. I even thought the print was dead. Deb, did you believe this?

[00:03:23] DC: No. I usually don't talk to people who say that, so I'm going to make one exception. That's the last time you could ever say that on my podcast.

[00:03:32] FB: So XMPie calls me up, and they have this opportunity to put a product on the web that was fantastic, an amazing platform that allows very variable data printing, that allows variable data imaging, all sorts of channels of communication. To me, it was a phenomenal platform. I was like, what was my head. where was my head, I missed something somewhere. So the combination of print and ecommerce in my mind is a fireball. This is where the market is going and this is the hot place to be. It's very exciting, it's very challenging, but it's a lot of fun. Things got well.

[00:04:09] DC: Not to be outdone by – Phil, you also have the guest here who we will be introducing shortly. I mean, let's set the landscape here. COVID has changed the world in so many ways. But really, customer convenience, and instant gratification top the list for most people. I know I've been at red lights, and I order things online, and they're at my house the next day. That's what people have now are trained to do. You go to a site, you see what you want, you read some information about it. Maybe you look and see what other people are saying about it, then you push a button, and magically, instant gratification. Your order is sent, you get a little confirmation that it's on the way, it's in progress. Whether it's pizza, or a package, product, or some amazing printed material. Let's start here, and let's play a little fill in the blank game. So pre-COVID, an online ordering system was a consideration. Post-COVID, an online system is... fill in the blank. Phil, start with you.

[00:05:18] PG: The potential go-to-market, really. There's no excuse. It's the only way really to be competitive.

[00:05:24] DC: Felix, same question. In post-COVID, an online ordering system is...

[00:05:31] FB: That's a way to market your products, and your company, your services. It's not a web to print. It's essentially the image of your company and the workflow of your jobs getting into your company. It's not an afterthought. It's an essential part of your business. It's not a different channel. It's not somebody in the corner checking for orders once an hour. It has to be integrated in part of the business. It is an essential idea that people don't get it right now. They think it's, "Oh, it's another way to collect emails and collect jobs." It's not. It has to be part of the functioning of the business. Online nowadays is – COVID has proven and make it accelerated. It's the way to go. It is the only way to go. This is how people think of a business nowadays in terms of communication.

[00:06:18] DC: I agree. Combining your answers, after COVID, it is an essential business tool. I could not agree with you more. In my conversations with printers, there are a host of reasons why they don't want to offer online ordering. One of them I hear the most is, "We want to talk to our customers, we want to understand what they want to do." As a former agency print buyer, I really can't object to that, because I do believe in

collaboration. However, I do not need to talk to my printers about every single job. As we know, the less time humans spend on jobs at the print shop, the more money, and margins there are for printers. That is probably the lowest hanging fruit of web to print online ordering systems value proposition, part of the speed to market, customer convenience. Online ordering allows me to not spend time on business cards when I could be prospecting customers or talking to other people, but adding things to their work and their needs.

We really want to focus now on those bigger ecommerce opportunities and how XMPie sets up print shops for success, which is the perfect time to introduce our guests. We have two more gentlemen joining our conversations, joining our conversation here. Phil, why don't you introduce your guest, please?

[00:07:46] PG: Of course. Yeah. Well, it gives me great pleasure to introduce John Conroy, who's been Managing Director at Claremon Ltd for 20 years now. Claremon is based in Bradford, West Yorkshire, which is in the north of England. It's a forward-thinking business that services corporates, large SMEs, and marketing agencies. It's also got a big focus on sustainability. When I first met John back in 2019, he was looking for ways to differentiate and diversify Claremon from its competitors. Claremon now has an integrated XMPie store flow web to print solution with omni channel campaign capabilities as well.

[00:08:19] DC: Felix, introduce your guest, please?

[00:08:21] FB: I would like to introduce Scott Williams. Scott Williams leads a company called Rocket. He's the rocket star of printing and XMPie. We've worked together since the beginning of COVID. I believe that's when we got introduced. Let's just say that they got accelerated into, let's do this, and how do we do that, and build something online really fast. Scott learned very quickly, and I think he's now very comfortable talking about it, and it's going to be a great addition to our podcast today.

[00:08:50] DC: Excellent. Gentlemen, I'm going to really address these next questions to you. I'll just pick either John or Scott to start off. Obviously, if I go to your website, and you have an online ordering system, I can see it there. But I'm interested in how you communicate about this, to potential customers out there, and how you position it as a value proposition for them to work with you. Scott, let's start with you.

[00:09:17] SW: It's a great question, Deborah to start. A little bit of background about Rocket and I'll let you think about this for a minute. We acquired another company in December of 2019, effectively doubling our size overnight, and then we know what happened only, it was less than three months later. It's pretty hard to buy a company and then not be able to go visit it for a year and a half. We had acquired XMPie 2017, I think,

and we were actually building out what we saw the future, what we believe the future to be with web to print and online ordering. So we were just taking our time like traditional print companies do. They take their time making decision. So this really accelerated what we had to do, in order to be able to service our clients, like you touched on a few minutes ago, Deborah. It came obviously with its challenges, not being able to be face to face, especially with the newly acquired company. But as we work through that, we realized that customers didn't need to see us.

As mature as the printing industry is, a lot of our, I'll call them legacy salespeople felt that they had to be in front of people, and to try to get them to change that basically, overnight, it was difficult. Still, there's some challenges with it today. But we can see that if you're not embracing the digital, and you're not embracing this space, then – print is not dead, Felix. It's alive and well. But if you are going to try and stay in that traditional space, I believe you will die. By embracing the digital web to print, and creating portals for our own for our existing clients. We can touch on that probably a little bit later on how we're making their life easier by allowing them to go on an order at any time their own stuff without having to interact on phone, or even an email with one of our customer service reps is really important.

[00:11:23] DC: I've just never understood why I know where my pizza is. Not only do I know where my pizza is, I know who made my pizza. I know who's making sure my pizza is okay, then I know who's driving my pizza to my door. But there's a couple of touch points. I don't need to know everything about what's going on in the print shop, but just a couple of things. I put an order in, we've received it. Thank you. I can feel comfortable and safe that you have my order. Everything's fine, it's moving into the print shop, or "We have an issue. Your art is a little low res, can you send us something and then we'll start the process? Your orders, your job is finished, your jobs in the mail. Here's your tracking number. Have a great day." That is not so complicated.

What I find is that the printers, they kind of feel it's their upselling moment, and I also don't understand that because your website and your ecommerce system can be your upselling moment without having to be in someone's face as you mentioned, Scott. John, what is your process? Is it similar to what Scott has said? If you found any sort of friction with people who are like, "No, we must talk to our customers" or have you been able to convince them that they can spend their time better not happy to talk to everybody?

[00:12:44] JC: Yeah. Thanks, Deborah. It sounds like Scott and I have a similar experience of implementing web to print or we call it our marketing assets portal. First of all, you mentioned that you can go onto my site and you'd see there. You won't in ours, because we don't promote it overtly to new customers through our website. It's very much a bespoke build that we do for each of our clients. Yeah, I mean, that's a great point that printers, we would have always said, yeah, we want to have the conversation

with our customer. But I've not met many printers that are that good at doing the upsell. So you better remove the conversation, let the machine do it. That's reliable, and we'll do it every time. That's what we've done. Our proposition to our customers, when you ask how I would promote this to our prospects, I should say. Is that, we can save you a sack of time, we can save you a stack of hassle, we can remove a whole lot of errors. Because of how easy XMPie in particular is to deploy on a star-by-star basis, we can say, "We'll even show you what it's going to look like before you make the decision." And almost give them approve the case before they make the decision to buy.

[BREAK]

[00:13:48] DC: Print Media Centr provides printspiration and resources to our vast network of print and marketing professionals. Whether you are an industry supplier, print service provider, print customer, or consultant, we have you covered with topical sales, and marketing content, event support, and coverage, these podcasts, and an array of community lifting initiatives. We also work with printers, suppliers, and industry organizations, helping them to create meaningful relationships with customers and achieve success with their sales, social media, and content marketing endeavors. Visit [printmediacentr.com](http://printmediacentr.com), and connect with the Printerverse. Print long and prosper.

[INTERVIEW CONTINUES]

[00:14:33] DC: I mean, I'm a firm believer in the good, better, best, let the customer make the decision. To just give an example of how this could all work and cover everybody's needs, a direct mail postcard, these many costs this much. Interested in knowing how to get a better response rate, give us a call, or click here to contact us, or think about adding digital marketing to your project, and then that. Now, you have a fully-engaged invested customer or prospect calling you to ask how you can help them versus, "Oh, you don't want to do it that way. You want to do it this way." As a consumer, you hear that sale in it. It doesn't sound like it's helping people. At least as a print customer, that is certainly how I take it.

Both of you – and by the way, marketing assets portal, stealing that, genius, love it. I love the whole stickiness of the portal. Can you actually talk about that? What do you do in those portals for customers? I think this is so important.

[00:15:42] JC: Yeah. You could try to buy the domain marketing assets portal, but you will buy it, because we've got it. So really, for us, we work with a branded larger SMEs and corporates. All our calls are branded and bespoke to a particular, fit to a particular business. For instance, one of our biggest users is in financial services. There's a great deal of compliance, and red tape, we'd call it in order to get a job printed. Of course, now, the templates are locked down, all the compliance stuff is locked down, so nobody

can buff with it. Users could just – the bits that are pertinent to them, so their contact details, and it just flows through their business and through ours. To the point that we need to be talking to customers, yeah. We would invest a lot of time in talking to the senior decision makers about, "Okay. What are the next assets that are going to help your businesses, and your operatives draw their territories" and that's where the conversations take place. Then, thrown down the line, we build it, we deploy it, we advertise it to the networks. That's where the benefit of these technologies are for us.

[00:16:43] SW: We'll reinforce what John is saying. It's interesting that he brought up – John, that you brought up financial. We're building a site right now around that very thing, where a lot of it is repeatable. But the other piece of that is, we have such turnover in our workforce now, so you're able to – as you said, John, lock that stuff down, and it doesn't matter if a new manager comes in or whatever, that stuff's already been preset. If you can start showing your clients those are the areas where they're going to save time, and time is money, to be able to continue to order that stuff, it makes a world of difference.

[00:17:21] DC: It absolutely does. I used to work on financial ads for Citibank. We would release 40 newspaper ads per week. Let me tell you, that depending upon what state they were showing in, there were different legal requirements, and there were different legal requirements for the disclaimers, if they were in like Florida. They had to be bigger because of the older people needing to read it. Having some a marketing asset portal that also allows me to personalize and customize materials, make sure that to your most excellent point, the wrong information is not in there. Their logos are not in there. I mean, things that cause unnecessary reprints, and headaches for everybody is just really the way to go. Phil, you had something to add?

[00:18:15] PG: Yeah, I was just going to add to what John had said. I mean, he referred to, he didn't refer to it as a term of web to print. I think that's a really good thing, because most people when they refer to web to print, you have this kind of thought conjured up in your mind that it's just sort of commodity stuff, and everybody can do that. But actually, to position it as a marketing portal, or marketing assets portal, actually allows you to sell more value, and actually, it does have more value. It does protect the brand and still allow customization and configuration inside.

[00:18:45] DC: Yeah, I agree. I mean, I would also say that most print customers, web to print is an industry term. I mean, they just call it an online ordering system, or I can get that online, they don't even go any further. Scott, let's go to you now. Have you been able to grow your business through XMPie and the tools that they offer?

[00:19:07] SW: Absolutely, no question. Probably it's going to sound maybe a little bit silly, but as an example for – you take a legacy team of salespeople, and when they



finally catch on, they realize just how easy it is. Think of a retail – I'm thinking of a couple of our clients now in retail space or even the restaurant industry. I always equate it to, if you have a really good insurance salesperson and at a young age, like they y sell the right product, then they just have residual coming in when they get into their 40s, 50s, and it becomes a pretty comfortable position. If I think of a local restaurant, and I'm trying to think through the lens of a salesperson, I think well if I go to that restaurant, they might do \$3,000, \$4,000 a year worth of print, and it's going to take me a long time back and forth with them to get them to commit. Then all of a sudden, somebody down the street comes in and offers them five cents, better price. It truly, as you mentioned, commodity. It becomes a commodity.

How can you as a printer differentiate yourself from the guy down the street? This is the perfect example. The ones that the team members that have caught on to it is, they now go in, they say – and I love that marketing assets, John. When we say. "We can build a site for you, where we can nail down your brand, we can nail down your assets, all of that stuff." We'll have that conversation. We'll talk about the paper. Then even if that person that orders that stuff today, leaves tomorrow, we've still got – we've retained all that information on your behalf. The only thing I'm asking you to do is remember the password, and so they continue to order. So now, all of a sudden, the team is thinking, "Okay. One restaurant might only be worth 5,000. But if I go out and find 10 restaurants, and I'm not good insurance salesperson, or I'm not good print salesperson, and I sell them on this idea, then I've walked down that restaurant, or those 10 restaurants that are now \$50,000 plus worth of business. When that printer down the street comes in that doesn't have the ability to do this comes in and says, 'Hey, I can give you a better price.' No, that's alright. I usually place my order at three o'clock in the morning, and I get a confirmation. Three days later, my project shows up as long as we can get paid for these days."

It sets us apart greatly from our competitors and it encourages. Back to your question, it allows us to increase in areas where it might not necessarily have wanted to go chasing smaller orders, or if we look at – but then you start looking at lifetime value of that customer. If we can keep that restaurant at \$5,000 a year for the next 10 years. Well, now it becomes significant to the salesperson.

[00:21:51] DC: Yeah. Once that customer is that sticky with you is really where – somebody call it upsell. I just call it added value. What else can I do with that customer? Well, maybe that restaurant has holiday, they have catering for holidays. They know they're going to have it every single year. You can lock them into a package for the entire year that includes holiday promotions, and they can have whatever they want using this amazing marketing asset portal. They just upload the dates, and whatever it is. Reserve your seat here. Here's the turkey dinner and what it costs. Here's your special menu for it. It's customer convenience, it's not an upsell.



To your point, you can lock them into that contract for the year. Why would they stop working with you? It goes way beyond that if we think about a shoe store have seasonal sales, sporting goods stores have seasonal sales. All the things you can start predicting to help them do additional work with you. John, how are you growing your business besides your amazing marketing assets portal? Which we're just going to keep competing, so it gets into everybody's head about this amazing opportunity with XMPie.

[00:23:09] JC: Well, very similar to Scott. I think it sounds like we've identified the same thing because one of the things that salespeople are fascinated with is visiting customers, and salespeople have this tendency to cross over into taking orders. Well, that's not the job of a salesperson. So you want your salespeople going out, winning new business, hand it over to your accounts [inaudible 00:23:31], which is fantastic, because there's a piece of technology that does that for us. Then the process just goes on, like Scott says, they can build a portfolio. Let's be honest, mediocre clients that are not big spenders, but portfolio are those, done a couple of things for us as printers. It spreads our risk. It means that this revenue's locked in and is recurring.

Equally, I think from client side, I think – I've had customers said to me, "Well, we've got a marketing team that do all that artwork, editing." I'm saying, "Why are you having marketing professionals edit artwork? This is crazy. You don't even need to have artwork edited nowadays. We can do that for you." There's zero timeline, zero sickness, holidays, zero mistakes. It just is. I think, one of the ways that we present is, it's about getting the right people to do the right job. If you want to talk to me or one of my team for expertise on paper, then we have the same problem, Scott, availability. Then, of course, we'll have that conversation. But you don't need to speak to me, because you want to place an order for 250 business cards, and you want to know that you can have them tomorrow, or on an express service. It's just another component of our business that allows us to get the right people doing the right process, performing the right function, and at the right time. It's just another step along that journey.

[BREAK]

[00:24:57] ANNOUNCER: You're listening to the future of print from physical to digital, produced by XMPie, the personalization platform that powers the print industry. Remove the obstacles created by human-led sales, ordering, preparation, and production processes with XMPie. Our award-winning, scalable, industry-leading ecommerce solution makes it easy to put a range of ready-to-order, results driving communications at your customers' fingertips 24/7. Learn how at [xmpie.com](http://xmpie.com).

[INTERVIEW CONTINUES]

[00:25:30] DC: I couldn't agree with you more here, and I've had this crazy idea that I'm going to run it by you too, guys. One of them is that, to incentivize the salespeople to use the processes that keep the humans out of it, give them a higher margin on anything that goes through the portal that they don't have to touch. By the way, it could be a customer reward too. There was a time where there was for everybody who is of a certain age, there was these things called discs and you had to send them to printers. When you send them to the printers, there was a certain amount of time where it wasn't a rush, and there was a certain amount of time where it was a rush, because there was no such thing as digital printing at that time. We were incentivized to not give you the disc in rush charges, because we didn't want to pay the extra money.

Technically, you can pitch to your customers, "If you don't need to talk to us, it cost this much for the business cards. If you want to talk to us, then maybe there's an additional." I don't know exactly how that's worded, but there could be some sort of reward system in any sense. Scott, you're laughing at me. You think that's completely off the wall?

[00:26:45] SW: This is where I hope that our sales team doesn't get a hold of this podcast, because we're already at a management level, having conversations around incentive plans or how to actually make this work. Because you're saying a few minutes ago, time is money. And if we can reduce that interaction – we don't want to make it impersonal. It's still, we're all about relationships, and being personal with our clients, but they're busy too. So if we can make their lives easier, we can make our – back to John's idea around process. If we can improve our processes, because we're all squeezed for merging, and everything. and we know what's happening with supply chain, and everything else, and the increased cost of goods. This is an area that we've literally already had conversations about, how can we encourage our sales team to sell this more, and get our clients, or potential new clients onto this system? There is financial incentives that we've talked about, and you're right too. You don't want to give all your margin away either. That's not what this is about. You're trying to improve your efficiency, so you can increase your margin. But is there a piece of that that you can give back to your client? Is it a tiered system where they get a percentage or whatever?

[00:28:04] DC: Yeah. I mean, honestly, it could be anything such as, "Because you have placed seven orders through our online system, we are now offsetting the carbon for that." That is something that would resonate so much with the Gen Zers, and the millennials too. That there's so many ways to incentivize them, to really just have less people involved in the process, and it's a benefit for them. John, incentivizing, thinking about it, of how to get more of your customers on the portal, and the salespeople really saying, "This is how you want to keep ordering this." Or even, have you ever gone back on Amazon, or you said something like that? It says, "You've ordered this before. Do you want to order it again?" All you do is push yes and you go along. There are certainly a million things in a print shop that people reorder or to your point with, you're amazing – I

wrote it down, marketing assets portal, here are the business cards for everybody in the company. All I'm doing is sending in the new name, and title, and the phone extension, and I can just push order again. John?

[00:29:18] JC: Yeah, I think all the clients like to see my financial service, although I've always tried to present it to them. While it'll be as competitive as you'd always expected to be, the real savings for them, the real wins for them, the convenience, and the time. Because I don't want to give away my margin. Of course, it begs the question, what incentive is there in the first place just to get the customer started? We've done things like we've bundled some starter packs. When they place the first order, they'll get a few quid off and so on. Then once you get into the habit of use, we've actually found that they actually order more print, because it's so convenient. This is better than most salespeople. It sounds like I'm bashing salespeople here, I'm not. I'm a salesman, but I'll tell you when they need bashing.

[00:30:07] DC: Yeah, and I agree with you 1000%, I would not give them discounts on anything, but we will add a varnish to the first order you put through our online system. Which by the way, is a great way for them to see what their printing would look like with a special effect on it, which is an upsell moment disguised as a value add for a customer. Not really disguised. It is a value add for the customer. I want to bring XMPie back into the conversation. I don't really know the size of the print shops that John and Scott are representing, but I think that there might be misunderstanding out there about, is a kind of print shop be too small for an online ordering system or for any of the tools that XMPie offers. Felix, let's start with you.

[00:30:58] FB: I'll give you an example. There's a small printer in Toronto that I had a discussion with. They're like a five-people shop, and they started with online. I mean, online is where they began. It's not about the product you sell, it's the service, it's offering the ability to perform a task, that's the customer needs. It's not about printing. We had the conversation at the beginning. It's about offering a service online, and expanding the service is the name of the game, and automating, making things easier. You mentioned it earlier, people want – whatever they want, they want it quick. So you have to think about not only ordering, but also what happens behind. Where does it go if something happens? Is there a CSR that needs to open, then put it into the regular production because their regular production is somewhere else.

Small shops are the future of printing, and they may be feeding the bigger guys, the guys that have the equipment, the hardware, because it's a very heavy financial investment. We can learn from the smaller ones. This is where the innovation is going to come, and we're there to help them.

[00:32:04] DC: I had a really interesting conversation at a trade show a couple of weeks ago, and the manufacturer was educating students in graphic communication programs about printing, and they were actually doing a good job. They'd bring them to print shops, they were seeing equipment, and all that stuff. But what he said as an aside was that, "Unfortunately, where this was in the United States is a 99% chance that none of these people will ever have the opportunity to buy printing equipment, or get into the printing business, own their own print shop." I said to him, "They don't need to do that. All they need is an online storefront with an API that calls into any trade printer out there, or any printer that they can make a relationship with, and essentially open up their own business, become entrepreneurs. If they want to one day become print shop owners, this is a way for them to do it. If they want to leave the equipment, and all of that to Scott and John, they can do that as well, or any of the trade printers out there."

Phil, how would somebody even get started in any of this? Do they just call XMPie, and say, "I want an online ordering system" or is this just a part of a bigger conversation that you really want to have with everybody coming to you?

[00:33:28] PG: Certainly, come to us and have the conversation, but it is part of a bigger conversation, Deborah, yeah. And reiterating what Felix has said, we've got many customers that are just four, or five people that start off. What you have to remember is, it's not just about taking the orders, it's about the complete end-to-end automation. Actually, it means that those smaller businesses can actually compete with the larger players, because they're bringing in efficiency. I would say, yeah, have the conversation with us, but it won't just be about web to print, it will be the bigger picture. I just would also like to just refer back to when I first met John, when John first called me, he was interested in just diversifying, doing something to differentiate his business. We didn't talk about web to print because John already had a web to print system. We talked about omni channel just to give him something that was different.

It wasn't long before John realized that actually having a single system that could do everything would be an advantage. But I think what's also worth drilling into is how the omni channel elements within that same marketing portal, not web to print, but marketing portal. How's that helped the business?

[00:34:38] JC: It's been a real benefit to our business. I mean, customers, some print is functional prints or the things that you have to have the letter, the business cards, the all departments, the notepads, those kinds of things. Then there's the marketing side, and a lot of our customers use it for that. Then it's allowed us to have those conversations, those face-to-face conversations and said, "Look, how else can we leverage the investment that you make and imprint marketing to make it more effective for you?" That's going to mean that we can add other channels to that, we can do some direct mail piece, we can do an email primer, and a print piece follow up. It really allowed us to add

some value to the relationship. I will go, and it says it all over the walls at Claremon HQ, is that we want to be seen as a marketing services provider, because print often isn't enough. So we want to do the whole the whole piece. I mean, we put ink on paper at the core of our business, but we want to do the whole thing and the portal has allowed us to have those conversations and deliver those results.

[BREAK]

[00:35:40] DC: Like what you hear? Leave us a comment, click a few stars, share this episode, and please subscribe to the show. Are you interested in being the guest and sharing your information with our active and growing global audience? Podcasts are trending as a potent direct marketing and educational channel for brands and businesses who want to provide portable content for customers and consumers. Visit [printmediacentr.com](http://printmediacentr.com), click on podcast and request a partner package today. Share long and prosper

[INTERVIEW CONTINUES]

[00:36:15] DC: Print doesn't live in its own thing in most cases anymore. And not only do you want to work with a printer who has the most equipment possible, so you're dealing – I say, one PO to rule them all. But if you can also get your social media assets, and your email blasts, and your digital – your banner ads from the same place, it goes back to customer convenience. To the excellent points that everyone on this podcast has made, everybody's having workforce development problems. It's not just us, you know. So if you can help customers, obviously, get the most they can from one person and have that relationship, it really is beneficial to the business. I know Felix, you wanted to comment on what Phil had said before.

[00:37:04] FB: I just wanted to add about the smaller printer. I mean, there may be opportunities for the established guys like Scott and John to offer a storefront for smaller – not necessarily a print business, but it could be a marketing provider. So they can set up a store that has the look and feel of that provider. And it's produced, and it's fueled by John and Scott's engine. Not only in the in the backend for printing, but also for the storefronts. I mean, XMPie is an infrastructure. It's not just a one storefront. It's an infrastructure to facilitate bringing the products to market. There's opportunity, I would think. I put it to Scott and John, if you see any value in that, in partnering with the marketing people to sell your product on their web storefront.

[00:37:47] SW: I'm going to take a chance here and say something that might not be popular. When we acquired Bounty back in December 2019, we were known as Taylor Printing. We rebrand it to Rocket, and we specifically dropped the name printing from our name. It was intentional. I do believe that printing will always be at the core of what

we do, but with our clients or potential clients, we were seen as a printing company, and we weren't seen as a communications company as John referenced. We want to be seen as that holistic, all-encompassing print and communications company.

The part that may not be popular is, one of the things that I've seen over the years is when you work with an agency, we've had – going back the 30 years, there's clients that I still have from a printing perspective, but I've seen them roll through agency, after agency, after agency. This might not be fair, but what I understand is, that the agency comes in says, "What's your budget?" Then they try and figure out how much they can keep for themselves. If they've got to spend a little bit on print, or they're going to spend a little bit on TV, or whatever, that's hard cost going out the door of that piece of the budget. As we've explored this, and this is where XMPie comes in, and the ability to collect the data behind XMPie, and be able to feed that back to our clients and say, "This piece works. This piece doesn't." And we want to be held accountable with our clients on that marketing side of things. I think that's the piece that's missing right now in that agency world, is we're willing to go in and say, "You know what, we truly want to partner with you. We want to understand what – Are you trying to increase brand awareness? Are you trying to increase top line revenue? What is it that you want to do? And then hold us accountable to come to you with a solution."

Now, we can come in and say, "You know what, print isn't going to work for you in this space. It's SMS, it's email campaigns, it's directing people to your digital." Or conversely, we might use print to drive them to digital, and you start to build that trustworthiness that you truly have. Because it never made sense to me, if the agency is so good, why are they cycling through agency after agency every two to three years? Yet the printer who's got probably more capital expenditure than anybody involved in the process has stuck it out with them. I think it's part of our changing world, and people want to know where their money is going. They want to know if it's been used effectively. I think that we are positioned. If you're a printer and you want to play in this space, you're going to position yourself well for being profitable and successful going into the future.

[00:40:33] DC: You just made such an amazing point that I want to echo and just add something too, as an agency barrier. The system that we used to have in place was really like an apprenticeship system. I mean, for the first year I worked in advertising agency. I carried around a match print and a grease pencil. I wasn't allowed to talk to anybody, wasn't allowed to ask any questions, you just listen, and do whatever the creative director say, and that was it, you did not get any altercations with anybody. But then you started understanding what everybody did, and you also started understanding very quickly that your printers, and your technology partners, whatever they might be, were the ones who had the answers to the questions that you didn't know the answers to. Or worse, you're afraid to ask somebody else, because they were going to know that you didn't know the answer.



Now, that system is gone with remote working. There are people who have never bought printer in their life, or they're procurement people, they also buy office furniture, and they're buying print. If you can establish some sort of trust with them, that you have their best interest, and their career development in mind, and you're not just trying to sell them something, they will ask you more questions, and you will have more opportunities to collaborate when the job comes up. It's not, "I want this." It's, "I want to achieve this. What do you think is possible?"

Scott, I'm going to stick with you for one second. Usually, I ask this to the vendors that I'm speaking with. But since you are here, I'm going to ask you. How has XMPie helped you implement your system? What is the support that you have gotten? Is it – I'm going to use the word difficult to train your employees on anything they might need to do on your end? As we know that some of the objections of printers on implementing any software at this point is, "I don't know if that person is going to stay, so I don't want to invest in educating them, and then they go somewhere else with this knowledge."

[00:42:44] SW: For starters, it is really easy to work with XMPie. Felix, I mean, he actually answers his phone. The support has been great. One of the things that's been really cool for us, again, I referenced this a few times now, but printing has a very mature industry. We've got people north of 70 working out in our plant and stuff. But since the introduction of XMPie, we've actually been able to hire those Gen Zs, the millennials, and they embrace this. I think John referenced it earlier about having the right people in the right chair. It truly is, it's these younger people that were bringing in that truly embrace this technology, and it's actually brought some energy and life that otherwise wouldn't have been there. It's, I would say, due in large part to us looking into the future, and knowing that XMPie is part of that future, a huge part of that future, and being able to attract the talent that we need to execute on it.

Has it been easy? I will not lie. It has not been easy. Some days, you do, you wonder if it's worth it, because software is still software. Sometimes I refer to software as a Ponzi scheme, but it's worth it. It really is, and I would encourage any printer that's maybe sitting on the fence, and are wondering, "Should I make this investment?" I would say, absolutely, and I would tell them to definitely look at XMPie as that partner. That's truly what it is. It has to be a partnership. It's not just going out and buying some software and you're on your own. You've got to be able to work together on it.

[00:44:29] DC: John, same question to you. How has XMPie supported you through your journey, helped you understand the possibilities, and been involved in providing some sort of training materials or help you train your employees who operate behind the scenes for you?



[00:44:47] JC: I think the fact that we operate XMPie in particular with the [inaudible 00:44:50] store and campaigns on demand has fundamentally shifted our attitude to our business. For example, in 2020, I went out and bought a creative agency in particular, because they had some skills in regard to web and digital marketing. That was because of the pairing that I could see for XMPie, and their experience with driving traffic to websites and so on. In terms of the support we've had, and the training from XMPie, I mean, we've been really lucky. The team in the UK are fantastic, and we can pick up the phone. I'm suspecting that I share some of Scott's frustration, sometimes you just think, "What have I done? What have I done?" But then, you look at the order book, and there's another 20 orders popped in that you haven't even had to raise a pencil for, and the others are going through the workflow, and the next thing you'll be doing with them is just signing off the invoices.

[00:45:43] DC: Sometimes, I have about this with printers, or they want to eat the whole elephant at one time. "I want to put every product that can make up on the ecommerce store, and the portal." I'm like, "Why don't you just start with the three most popular things, a business card, a postcard, a trifold brochure that you don't really need a lot of human intervention on, and see – and then start introducing things that work with that. Well, if you need a business card, what else might you need? Do you need a banner or do you need an event kit? Store it. Just making, making small progress developing your store. You don't have to start off with every single product. I think that's why it gets very overwhelming for people.

I just put up a store with T-shirts, by the way. Nothing else. Let me tell you something, three weeks going back and forth of. "Well, do I want mugs? Do I want –?" I'm like, "Just put the T-shirts. Let's start with that." Let's build and see what people are doing, and the questions that they're asking, and can we provide content to help them understand what adding an embellishment would do, or die cutting something, or how a piece of white format works with a business card, or a poster, or any of the things that they might not be thinking that they need, but they just don't understand. I really feel that these systems are communication devices and education devices.

The most important part of it is that, if you can get the customers and your web traffic, by the way, that's visiting your site. I will guarantee you, if there were a regular person out there, they visit your site, they don't see an online store, they're on to the next site. They want to at least know if they want to place an order without talking to anybody they can. However that traffic is coming in, it's a customer convenience, it is a place where you can educate people on all the opportunities you can – like I said, if you're interested in growing your event attendance, give us a call about adding marketing technology or any of the things that both Scott and John mentioned today, and of course, Felix and Phil.

Thank you, guys, so much for everything today, for sharing your knowledge about ecommerce and marketing asset portals, everybody. You can't own the URL, but we can certainly steal the phrase and I suggest that you do. Everything that we have mentioned in this podcast as well as links to all of our guests, and all the opportunities to connect, and learn from XMPie will be in the show notes of all of the podcasts. I really want to thank Dave and Ilet from XMPie for helping me produce all of these podcasts and having our amazing guests with us. Until next time, everybody. XMPie long and prosper.

[OUTRO]

[00:48:50] ANNOUNCER: The future of podcasts from physical to digital, an XMPie Podcast Conference was produced by XMPie, and presented by the intergalactic ambassador to the Printerverse, Deborah Corn. If you liked the show, tell a colleague, or leave us a review. We're on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn at XMPie. Our team is standing by to answer questions and help you solve your communications challenges. Get in touch with us at [xmpie.com](http://xmpie.com).

[END]