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[0:00:00.5] DC: This podcast is sponsored by XMPie, transforming communications and print businesses across the globe for more than 20 years. Learn how they can help you enhance and grow your services at XMPie.com and through the links in the show notes.

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:18.8] DC: It takes the right skills and the right innovation to design and manage meaningful print marketing solutions. Welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse, where we explore all facets of print and marketing that create stellar communications and sales opportunities for business success. I'm your host Deborah Corn, the Intergalactic Ambassador to the Printerverse. Thanks for tuning in. Listen long and prosper.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:45.8] DC: Hey everybody, welcome to Podcast From the Printerverse. This is Deborah Corn, your Intergalactic Ambassador, and today, we are going to be speaking with Dave Baldaro. He is the marketing operations manager and chief product advocate at XMPie. XMPie is a leading provider of software for cross-media, variable data, and one-to-one marketing. They offer solutions to help businesses create and manage highly effective direct marketing and omnichannel campaigns.

Dave, you are a past guest on the podcast, we did a lovely podcast conference a couple of years ago, which is still getting a lot of listens. Recently, I interviewed three of your customers and their stories were so amazing that I really wanted to use this podcast to encapsulate their journeys because they really took three different, you know, avenues with XMPie to grow their business.

For the listeners out there, I want you to know that XMPie is not something only the giant printers with tons of money and staff can take advantage of. You can start small, you can start with a few things that you want to do that are most important to you as far as your plans for

growing your business, or most important for the customers you currently have to attract more just like that.

But there are lots of options through XMPie and I don't want to get like, all Debbie Doom about it but data-driven marketing is the future of the printing industry. So, get in it now so you're not behind and you know, further behind, honestly. If I'm going to be honest about it. You're already behind if you're not doing something, you know, to help your customers connect with theirs on deeper, more meaningful levels.

So, Dave, I really want to start off with the fact that personalization is such a buzzword in the industry. I mean, even I am like, "Okay, enough with the personalization, we've heard it, we all understand this is the way that we're going." Working in advertising agencies for more than 25 years, I've also said to people, "Nobody I know wants to personalize 5,000 things." They'd rather customize them or regionalize them, or something like that.

So, from XMPie's perspective, can you discuss customization, I don't want to say, "Versus" or personalization.

[0:03:25.7] DB: Okay. Let me first say that Deborah, that it's a pleasure being back on.

[0:03:30.8] DC: That was a long intro before you've spoken.

[0:03:33.8] DB: That was a long intro but no, it's a pleasure to be back on, and okay, so let's jump into it, and I think you're right, for any business, anyone that's especially printing, they have to be forward-looking as to what's happening in the industry. They have to be looking at what's going to keep my business growing for the next 12, 24 months, and you're right, the term personalization has been banded in about, and hands up, yeah, we've been thinking for two decades now.

We've been talking about this, you know, for a long time. I've had the same conversation, time and time again, for many years but yet it isn't saturated. The market isn't saturated in what I would class or we would class as personalization and I think there's a, maybe, there's a variety of reasons why I think that but I think there's also some confusion and also some reluctance.

Maybe it's this big scary thing that you know, only the top echelons of the organizations can do, whether I need huge budgets to get involved in this, and it's not the case.

And I think, you know, there is a difference between customization or personalization. Ultimately though, it comes down to saving time and money and reaching more audience. I think if you take personalization, for me, personalization is about producing something for an audience of one. It is for me, it's for you, it's that flyer that comes to the door that says, you know, "Hey Deborah, here is your pizza coupon."

"I know what you ordered last time, I know what you should be ordering next time, here's a coupon code for you." It's all about you, it's to you, and contain personalization to that level or degree and many people think that's where they need to be, and sometimes, that puts people off because they don't know the customers. I don't have that level of understanding for my customers, so I can't do it.

I just carry on doing what I've been doing for the last 10 years and just bulk print and segment and try and get a little bit more savvy as to how I push out the print but there's also this market, which is about customization, and about driving relevancy through you know, the customized piece. Are they for customization? That's really about saving time and money, and it's about, "How do I enable my customers to be able to come on and create a piece of customized print, which is to their needs but addressing their customers?"

So, it doesn't necessarily be to an audience of one. It could be, "I need to customize this flier or this piece of marketing or a business card to my needs or my brand or my organization, my department, and have it created for me without having to go to a designer, without having to have a lengthy process involved." Those two markets are still very valid and driven through the same, you know, series of software.

So, I think it's very important that it isn't just about personalization. That customization piece comes into play very, very succinctly as well but ultimately, it's about driving time, money, and value.

[0:06:18.6] DC: I always like to use the example of the veterinarian because it's very simple, you don't need to know anything more about me other than my name, my address, and the type of animal that I have, right? And so, talking about customization versus personalization. So, the "Dear Deborah" part is part of the mailing list thing. I mean, that is basic personalization, no offense, you don't need XMPie for that, right?

But the image on the front can be a cat because I have a cat. That's the customization, and the customization is also the information I'm getting in that letter, in that postcard, or that little trifold brochure, whatever it might be, is all about the services they have for cats. I don't have to weed through and you know, figure out, you know, what is for cats, what's for dogs, what's for iguanas, right?

So, just in that basic customization, you have my interest because I know that it is for me. It's not everything a vet does. It's not telling me that my dog is due for a rabies shot and I don't have a dog, and I wish I did but I don't, I have a cat instead but technically, I have two cats but one is a little annoying so I try to forget that I have him sometimes but the point is that the other things coming to you might have a family of animals on the front and you have to figure out how it's relevant to you.

So, that's how I look at customization. It could be so simple, Dave, and I think – I'm not saying that XMPie is guilty of this but the industry is guilty of making this seem so complicated because everybody wants to show everything that a software piece can do or everything that a marketing campaign can do, instead of just focusing on the one simple thing that you can start with.

[0:08:21.9] DB: Deborah, let me just pick up on what you said there about relevancy because I think that's key. Again, it's like many people talk about personalization. As I said, personalization's all about a reader of one. However, you know, that customization is in many cases easy, so I don't need the data but just being you know, understanding whether you got a cat, a dog, or a snake, a mouse, a whatever it might be.

But that drives maybe potentially more relevancy in the piece because I don't need to, you know, be personalized to know that everybody expects the thing to be personalized. If I'm your customer, you're the vet, I expect you to know who I am, I'm paying you a monthly subscription,

I'm paying you for my animal's wellbeing. So, I expect you to know who I am as a customer. Personalization is expected, and I think that's where we're at.

However, relevancy is probably more valuable and relevancy doesn't necessarily have to come to personalization. Relevancy can come from simple customization. I can put the piece to you but I know that you have a cat, therefore the imagery is of cats, and I'm customizing that piece to your situation.

[0:09:25.6] DC: For cat owners, it's that simple. Cat owners, dog owners, iguana owners.

[0:09:30.7] DB: It doesn't have to be effects.

[0:09:31.9] DC: No, but if you want to get crazy, then you could go in an – maybe this, you know, at least, in my vet, I have to provide images of my animals. So, maybe my animals are on the postcard. I'm just saying, you can get crazy if you want to.

[0:09:45.0] DB: And that's it, you're right. The, you know, the market might. So, we've been in this market for 20 years, we've been talking about what's always possible. At the end of the spectrum, what's possible with the technology? And in some cases, yeah, it takes a while to get there but at the same time, it's just as simple to get started, and I think that's where we've got the three previous podcasts.

I think that's where we've shown some of these things with our customers. While they haven't just jumped in at the end spectrum, they've started this journey and looked at the business and grown the business.

[0:10:14.9] DC: So, let's actually talk about that. I think – I mean, all of the examples, whether it was Brian Hughes from Pel Hughes, or Rolf Schlossë from Team Jensen Pro Services, or Jay Mustafa from Thirst Creative.

[0:10:30.5] DB: Yup.

[0:10:31.4] DC: They all did something for the purpose of growing their business by providing customer convenience and options to their customers and –

[0:10:44.1] DB: Provide value.

[0:10:44.9] DC: Let's start with Brian because Brian made a conscious decision many years ago that the future of print and marketing was in data-driven marketing services. Can you share more about that and also, obviously, everybody should listen to the podcast, which we have links in the show notes.

[0:11:08.2] DB: It is a prerequisite but I think when you listen to Brian, you listen to the Pel Hughes story, it's about growth, it's about forward thinking, it's about looking at where the market's going, and go, "Okay, how am I going to grow my business? How am I going to protect my investment? How am I going to look after my family and grow my business up to where I want it to be?"

And I think, that comes through for me in talking to Brian, you know, on various occasion, that's what comes through to me in droves, you know? He was very pivotal in saying that data is key. You know, which both we might add, data is king in the market but whether it's still now, I don't know content is part of walking now but in regards to them, it was about data and okay, I'm going to focus in on that data requirement and pivot my business and grow my business and be able to succinctly fulfil services to my customers that are driven by data.

And he looked at XMPie and I think this is again, we're going back, I think he started his journey in 2004, 2005 with now almost two decades in, almost as long as XMPie's been going, and he's been growing with XMPie and looking at the capabilities the software, and growing each and every year, as to what else he can do, and how he can protect his business. So, for me, Brian's story is really all about growth, about looking at the opportunity where he can add value to the market.

And that wasn't data, say, "Okay, if you want to be able provide data-driven marketing, I'm your man. You know, I can chuck this stuff out the door easily, in large volumes, and fulfill and add

value at every step of the creation.” And they’ve done it very, very well, and they’ve continued growing their business year in, year out.

[0:12:50.6] DC: But they didn’t start there. They started as with a hundred-year-old printing company or something to that effect. You know, if you just think about the time that they started it, there was no technology like that. So, this was a really conscious decision he made about changing the way that they do business, position their own company, and the customers that they go after, and he described it as future-proof.

[0:13:19.3] DB: Yup, and I think, again, if you go back to the early days of Pel Hughes, they were already doing some variable data. They were already doing some personalized print but the way in which they were doing it was lengthy, laborious, which is quite a technical process. Data-conscious in serving the marketplace looks exactly, “Is there an easy way of doing this?” And this is where the XMPie, you know, sweeter software came in because it gave them a very creative edge.

I don’t need to have a team of programmers now, or I can reassign those programmers to looking in more detail elsewhere. I can take away a lot of that grammatical element to this and make this a simple process of a designer can create these templates and start driving this, that simplifies my business. Now, I could focus on growing my business, and so that was the starting point and you're right, they didn’t have everything at day one.

They’ve grown at various points, pivotal points through their evolution. So, for them, it was, “How do I start out? How do I simplify, yet, how am I growing my volume?” And again, that’s where the XMPie, you know, sweet set came into place for Pel Hughes, just fulfilling that need of saying, “How do I simplify the print process, how do I drive the print effectively?”

And again, that was a big piece because of the engines they’ve got, it’s not quite creating it. Anybody could do a mail merge but in order to drive presses up for right to speed, you have to have an optimum solution and that’s where XMPie fits.

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[0:14:44.6] DC: Are you looking to elevate your game, take your bottom-line customer relationships, and events to the next level? Then, I want to work with you. I'm Deborah Corn, the Intergalactic Ambassador to the Printerverse. I engage with a vast, global audience of print and marketing professionals across all stages of their careers. They are seeking topical information and resources, new ways to serve their customers and connect with them, optimize processes for their communications and operations, and they need the products and services and partnership you offer to get to their next level.

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[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:15:45.5] DC: Speaking about streamlining processes, Rolf Schlosser told an amazing story about how they revolutionized the label processing personalization, which it is personalization in this case, and the delivery time for the German Beekeepers Association, saving them weeks, weeks, in production time, weeks. It went from 60 hours to six minutes or something crazy like that or 60 hours to six hours. It's in the podcast, it's – everybody, it's in the show notes.

So, this is kind of framed under workflow and automation, you know? And again, buzz words that we are being bombarded with in the printing industry, which are usually defined by MIS systems and things of that nature but there is the same optimizations and efficiencies you can gain through a workflow automation, you can gain through a marketing automation, and this story is absolutely incredible. Can you elaborate a little more on this for people?

[0:16:52.6] DB: It is a great story. Even for the whole ecological piece, you know, but it's a great story, and for me, again, it's about value. I think what it highlights to me is that some of the best answers aren't staring us in the face. You know, when a printer looks at and they go, "How am I going to grow my business, how am I going to put more pages through the presses, how can I keep them busy, how can I grow my business?"

But Tim Young's story was, "How can I add more value to my customers?" And sometimes, that's not a blindingly obvious piece, and I think the automation has become a hugely more important these days with everyone looking at automation, and some of these stories need to be found, and I think that's the piece with the Tim Young and the bees because it's not an obvious one. You know, how this came about in the pre-existence stories, it would be interesting.

But for me, it's like, "How do I take a thousand beekeepers across the nation, and how do I give them a one portal or a one-stop shop for coming on, creating their own labeling for their products, and how do I facilitate that and get that out of the door?" That's not typical personalization, that's not typical [inaudible 0:18:06.4]. That's not where a printer would typically look.

But there are masses and I'll probably emphasize, there are massive amounts of opportunity in the market when you look at, "How can I streamline the business and how can I take or give value back by reducing what they're doing?" And I think, for me, that's the great beauty of their story because that's just what they've done. They've used the software to be able to, like I say, cut down and it was about 60 hours. It was a mastermind twist so minuscule and like –

[0:18:34.4] DC: It was ridiculous, yes, and the volume of labels that they're printing is in the millions but that's the high end of this story, right? So, I want to go to the low end of the story and I have a friend, his name is Craig Bower and he has a barbecue company called, Rub That Rocks. He makes his own labels, he makes his own packaging because he happens to be a designer.

But he has maybe 10, 15, products, and by the way, impeccably designed little packets, you know, barbecue, you know, little jars of rub and stuff like that. So, that's a smaller end, there are plenty of those people out there. Now –

[0:19:11.9] DB: A massive amount.

[0:19:12.0] DC: He happens to be a designer, right? So, he's making his own labels but if you just look at the companies, like go to a farmer's market or anything like that, and I'm only mentioning this because we're specifically speaking about labels right now. You ever go to like a

farmer's market or something local, a lot of times this is not something that they are paying attention to or spending money on, mostly because it's not their skillset.

They grow their vegetables, they make the candles, you know, whatever it might be in the farmer's market. That's not what their focus is on but how they present their brand to the world should matter, and this is a way that a printer can, on a small scale of what Rolf and Team Jansen Pro Services is doing, help a small company, and a small printer. This is manageable for a small printer.

So, can you elaborate on that, and also how does XMPie support this? Because this is automation, this is a little different than, you know, using a portal and getting people to put their logos and stuff in there.

[0:20:21.0] DB: I think that whole market of you know, the small to the medium, where your re-facilitating growth, you know, in the COVID years were – they facilitated a massive amount of small businesses being created, you know, to just keep going, and I think that you're right. You know, the whole packaging piece, the label piece is huge, and so, I mean if I was starting out a print organization, that's where I'll be looking to grow as well because there are massive amounts of smaller.

Rather than going after the big brands that lots of people are going for, facilitating some of these small organizations that have the same issues, and they don't have marketing budgets, they don't have designers, they don't have marketing. However, to give them the capabilities to say, "Look, I have the facilities to give you a portal or a brand or a marketing E-commerce site where you can quickly jump on, customize your piece, and get it to then fulfilled and printed by me," is hugely powerful because they don't have that capability.

And if they go to the big companies are on it, it is a massive eight-lay that they're going to do. They're going to print in phases because that's the quality market. I don't want to do that and I think when we talk about the opportunity in coming and doing the scale, that's where it presents as well. It's not difficult to get involved as a printer to set up those stalls or get involved in their stores and to start facilitating that easy market for customers coming in saying, "Look, I want to be able to customize my particular piece," and I might be a designer.

I might go into camera roll and I express and created it, I just want to be able to upload it, edit it, change it, and get it out the door. That's easy, super easy, and then I can start to grow, and that's because once I have those as sticky customers, now I can add more value. You know what? Actually, we can have more value to that, I can now take you in a different market, we can maybe personalize it.

You can actually do some marketing on the back of it but you start providing value, it's an easy market to get into.

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[0:22:15.8] DC: News from the Printiverse delivers topical sales and marketing insight along with plenty of printspiration one time a month to inboxes everywhere. Our contributors cover the industry and the future of print media and marketing with strategy for strengthening your customer relationships, better targeting of your prospects, and practical advice for helping your business grow. Printspiration is just a click away. Subscribe to News from the Printiverse at printmediacentr.com. Print long and prosper.

[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:22:50.9] DC: When it comes to creating sticky customers, Jay Mustafa, who is the managing director of Thirst Creative, has an advanced degree.

[0:22:58.8] DB: Yes.

[0:22:59.7] DC: He really is, you know, when we say a full-service print and creative solutions company, a lot of people would like to think that their businesses fall under that but I can say that Jay's actually is one of those businesses to the effect that I had to actually even ask him if he was a printer because I was so – nothing on his website was like, "Here, this is our equipment and this is what we print."

It was all about providing customer convenience and creative solutions to almost any demands that their client would have that they could anticipate and being able to work with you or with

their team to figure out how to incorporate things that they weren't doing that the customers were asking for or that they thought was the next step in the evolution of their campaigns. So, you like to describe Jay's story as David looking at Goliath. So, why don't you elaborate on that for everybody?

[0:24:04.7] DB: I think that it's just David playing football with Goliath. I'll just say that it doesn't have to be compliance, it doesn't have to be this massive, you know, investment in time, people, resources to get into this market, and I think if you are purely focused on commodity print whether you are a printer, whether you don't like to think you're a printer but you print if you're purely focused on commodity print.

You know, a hundred business cards for over 10 bucks or whatever it might be but it's like commodity like piece, it's a very difficult market because it is a commodity. So, I think the ones that have got this are the ones that are looking for that value piece and looking at the people that give you the customer value back. I might be printing but the focus here is on value and I think that's where Jay, you know, absolutely killed it, and he is.

You know, as a small business, he is playing in the same ballpark as the big companies but he's coming at it from a very value perspective. You know, he saw the opportunity, he's taken the software platform that XMPie provides, used it at a simple level but then grown massively to say, "Yeah, I can just keep rinse and repeating this for different companies, different organizations, different value propositions, and I can just keep doing this forever."

You know, every single customer I'm creating is a sticky customer and I can also have another conversation with them, which is like, "What else can I do and how else can I help you?" Not by, "How much more can I print for you?" "What else can I do for you? How else can I help your business grow?" That's where Jay's coming at, he's coming at it from a very design, you know, led side as well.

It's not just purely looking at print and saying, "How much do you want me to print?" You know, that for me is the success Jay's had with us and how he's growing that business.

[0:25:52.3] DC: Yeah. I mean, they are a creative agency that also prints, and you know, I hear his story and I hear you describing it and what I think is, you know, you get your estimates. Again, I was at bio and advertising agency so I always had to triple bid but imagine if one of those estimate comes back and it says, “The pricing includes a dedicated portal for your company to upkeep all your assets to make sure that the most up-to-date files are in there for proofing,” for –

I mean, it becomes a no-brainer because you’re comparing apples to apples on the printing, which we, you know, which is a mandatory job of a print buyer in a global – in a corporation or a publically traded company. You have to do it but at the end of the day, why am I choosing one over the other? Well, look at all this extra stuff we get and it’s included in this pricing, which might mean that estimate is a little higher but guess what?

I can justify it as long as it’s in the ballpark and I show what the added value is and I might not use them that time but that information is now in my head and I know that if I need some sort of system, where to store my files, to I mean, even works on the creative side too, you know? If you really want to get crazy about it and you want, you know, designers to be able to have files on your server, which talk about sticky customers, right?

[0:27:24.1] DB: Yep.

[0:27:24.6] DC: That their customers can also have access to and the printer, you’re creating a triangle, a team there, and for a lot of the smaller printers, a lot of the smaller design companies and marketing companies, this is something that they can actually create an ecosystem for, and add services and offer services to customers as their business is growing too, as their needs change, or when it’s, I hate using this term, but when it’s time to upsell.

You are not trying to add a varnish, you’re going to add a tracking to the direct mail so they know that it’s working. You are not going to add a PMS color or make it a little bigger, you’re going to add a website pixel so you know what pages people are looking at so you can turn around and then talk to them, as we mentioned, on that one-to-one level.

[0:28:25.2] DB: Whatever you do, as a business, whether you are in driving print, whether you're, you know, Pel Hughes, whether you are a Ralph looking at services and Tim Young's looking at growing the business at the nth degree, whether you are Jay looking to you know, grow and fulfill, it's all about adding value, you know? And as consumers, as customers, and you said that it all creates a sticky customer.

It's something that I see value in and that might not be something, that's actually something different for everyone but it's something, which I'm going to keep coming back to, and let's face it, we like doing things that are easy, things that save me time, things that save me money, things that allow me to do something quicker, those are things that I see value in because my time is precious, my money is precious.

So, if you can give me back something, which is valuable to me, then I'm going to keep coming back to and I think that goes across the whole spectrum, whether you look at simple personalization, just print, if I can just give you my data, and you can present that piece back to me, which is significantly more value, I'm not just paying, and I am paying for phase and for the print, I'm actually generating revenue on it because it's personalized, because it's relevant, and that's now easy to me.

All I ever do is just send you my data. Well, that's a marketing portal where, like you say, you know, I can now have a portal that's set up for me where I can come in, see my templates, customize my templates, personalize my templates, pay for it, just get it out the door, and I can do this while I'm sat in bed reading a book, even better because now, you're just saving me time, you are making something quicker for me.

So, again, you're adding me value back. I am going to keep coming back and I don't care whether it's a few cents extra than going to the trade printer down the road because I am getting more valuable back, which isn't just the print piece, and again, you look at the, you know, Tim Young's, you look at the higher end and what when we spoke solutions, again, it's about value, saving time and money.

Those beekeepers didn't have the capability and if they did, it was hours, weeks to put this in place, and that's a lengthy process and it is a painful process but no, it's all about driving that

value and I think across the breadth of what XMPie from customer to customer, this is what we see time and time again. It is about adding value right from the starting point all the way up.

[0:30:38.2] DC: And making your marketing meaningful and relevant and that's really why I love XMPie. I mean, it might sound – I am not a paid spokesperson for XMPie, I hope everybody knows that. I do work with them because I believe in the system that you're giving to the printers to keep their business relevant with their customers and in the world, and that is really my perspective on this, Dave.

Print does not live in a vacuum and it is tied to the way the world receives information, receives education, receives communications, and that is also tied into customer convenience, meaning is it simple for me to take this piece of print and get to the next step, whatever that next step might be. It could be making a phone call, it could be scanning a QR code, it could be signing up to attended event, whatever that happens to be.

And I guess you could do it static if you really wanted to if you had the time and money for something like that. I am not going to say it's impossible to do it but it is not practical, it's probably not what you want to tell your printing business up with but the point that we're trying to make here is that if nothing else, click the link below and take the future of personalization demo. Can you elaborate a little bit on what people will get out of that demo?

[0:32:13.8] DB: Okay, you're not biased, I am. That's pretty fair to say and just getting to the demo piece, we've always said that you know, XMPie is a platform to be built upon, and I see that across every name. The three podcasts that we've got, you know, they've used XMPie to build their businesses, and we say it time and time again, and I think it's all about adding value. It is all about driving that growth.

And I think this is where, you know, and you can use it at any level depending on what you can craft and I think this is where we put the future of personalization demo together, which we try not to articulate to some of those points. So, if you go to the link and you look at the future of personalization demo, there's a bunch of stuff that's thrown into this demo, and okay, this isn't for everyone.

But it was a task that I set myself to say, “Okay, how can I throw as much into this one part to try and show what’s possible, what is the feature, what’s capable?” Okay, not necessarily but again, all this is variable now. There’s no smoking mirrors involved in here. So, this demo tries to throw in, doesn’t try the ink on plates, no digital, it has print, it has emails on demand, personalized inquiry, personalized video, it’s all in there. So, if you go to the demo, it’s very simple.

It will ask you I think three things, give me your name, give me your email address, and give me a location. Those are three things and the reason I kept that is because I wanted to articulate the simplistic data. Again, it’s not all about having massive lengths of data to do this. We don’t have it but we live in a world where it is possible to create additional data. This wonderful thing called AI has now hit us at every single turn that we have in our daily lives.

So, how you could incorporate that, so three things, name, email, and a location. What we then do with that, as soon as I click submit to the next page, there’s a bunch of things that happen behind the scenes but essentially what’s happening is we take that data, if we go to ChatGPT and AI to say, “Actually, look, this person who’s told us I know it’s Deborah, I know she’s asking about, you know, New York.”

So, go to AI and ask AI to create me the content that I need to talk to Deborah about this particular demo for this particular location. So, it does that. So, now, I’m generating data that can be used as part of this campaign. So, once I have that, we then go to another service to translate that into an audio file because hey, we almost like video, we like audio. So, let’s give you back some more of this.

We translate that message into an audio and play it for you. At the same time, you’ve told us about New York in this case. So, actually, let’s go to another service, let’s go to Google Maps and say, “Hey, have you got some photos that anyone in the world has uploaded about New York?” And the answer will probably come back and say yes and say, “Look, we’ve grabbed one from you, so we grab one and send you back.” And we’ll use that.

So, I am adding more data, so now, I’ve just taken those three things, I’ll add in some AI-generated content, I’ve added an audio file, I’ve added an image that’s come from somewhere else. Once I’ve got all those three pieces, I’ve got enough to start exploring some other

opportunities with you. So, we'd bring you back in a page you can go and we're going to email to happen now for that particular location, for that particular, you know, feat sent to you where you can have some image personalization happening as well.

There is a piece of print that you can generate, so a PDF. I am generating live digital print-ready PDFs on the back of it as well, and then the final piece that we throw in was video personalization. So, taking the capability of producing a full rendered high-res image – not image, sorry, video just for you was part of the demo. So, again, we now use our own technology and after-effects and Adobe environment we have to take that data.

Take a template, take all the data that you give me, and the data that I've created or had created for me to throw that into a video and create your own fully high-res video and then string that back to your [Inaudible 0:36:04.2] all within under 40 seconds.

[SPONSOR MESSAGE]

[0:36:11.6] 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, click on podcasts, and request a partner package today. Share long and prosper.

[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:36:45.3] DC: Okay, that sounds very complicated. Do you need a degree in IT to do this? Who do you recommend who actually looks at the demo?

[0:36:53.1] DB: I think the demo is there to just give you a view into what is possible. Again, it's the future of personalization and it's using a variety of XMPie's core capabilities. There's no head in smoking mirrors in this, I am not hiding things that you have to have a you know, PH.D. degree to do. You know, this is all done and I actually put this demo together writing very little code using the no-code tools like Zapier and Power Automate to try and hook all of this together.

So, this is in the realms of pretty much any service provider, you do not need a PH.D. to do this. If you have some technical capability of handling data and using XMPie, this is within the realms of possibility, and it's doable today.

[0:37:38.3] DC: Last question, do people have to buy the entire XMPie suite or can they modularize it and just use things that they want to start with?

[0:37:48.3] DB: Okay, so the answer is no, they don't, and I think this, if you go back and listen to the other three podcasts, I think that plays out very heavily and again, whichever customer we talk to or customers talk to us, it's really about the journey and again, this is when the big pieces behind XMPie is it's not a one-size-fits-all piece of you know, software. You're not buying everything and go, "Okay, how do I even start?"

If you are a small printer that just has a single press and you want to start, "How do I get more value to my customers? So, I better – these are what I'm dealing with, like small micro businesses. How do I give them value?" or we could just talk about simplifying and adding value to that. I'm a packaging company, how can I start to string my organization, rather having like 20 different templates so that the 20 different skews, could I just have one template where it's customized based on the skew?

Yes, you can, and you can do that right at the bottom just using the desktop tools but then, and again, this is where partly Brian have the conversations starting at that level, which was just looking at personalization, and then as the business grows, you grow the volume up. You gain capacity that you need to put through because again, we're talking about highly optimized PDFs of print or print files.

So, we're talking about you know, very optimized print streams that can happen on a desktop but then XMPie grows in capacity and grows in capability as well as to what you can push through, and then again, you look at, you know, it was Brian from Pel Hughes that they started at print then look to what to print, then looked to cross-media, he grew in capability. What else can I give my customers in terms of value that XMPie has within its part, and again, not just in capability but in volume?

You know, when you look at Brian, he was going from one print vendor to multiple print vendors. You know, that same piece of software and they provide to print across the breadth of all his engines without having to go to different workplace for different engines and different input streams, it grows, and it has grown with him. So, it's all about modularities, all about the scalabilities, all about which elements do you need at which particular points, and where do you want to focus your business on.

Now, Jay was very much talking about the web to print, you know, and the e-commerce element to this. Now, of course, you get print capabilities thrown into that. You know, Tim Young who was looking very much at the omnichannel and the marketing communications and the print piece and the web to print piece of it as well, every customer is different and we say across each and every customer that we touch, someone will touch small and grow.

Some will start big and evolve and others will start in the middle with different pieces and say, "Okay, how can I take each the pieces and evolve their business?" And again, it's like looking at Brian, who you listened to Brian talk about the Christmas campaigns. Every year, that was the case. Well, how else can I use this, and how else can I take this toolkit that XMPie has given me and what else can I use and how can I tweak it?

You know, Brian is now looking at video. How can I bring that in? So, it is very much a modular solution that grows with the business and we like to think that we help our customers grow their value.

[0:41:05.7] DC: Everything you need to learn more about XMPie, sign up for the future of personalization demo, and see a list of the events that they're exhibiting at in 2025 are in the show notes. Dave, thank you so much for your another year of partnership with Print Media Centr and me, Deborah Corn, and for helping the printers generate more revenue, be more relevant with their customers, and make marketing meaningful.

Until next time, everybody, thank you so much for your time and attention. Print long personalized or customized long and prosper.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:41:47.3] DC: Thanks for listening to Podcasts From the Printerverse. Please subscribe, click some stars, and leave us a review. Connect with us through printmediacentr.com, we'd love to hear your feedback on our shows and topics that are of interest for future broadcasts. Until next time, thanks for joining us. Print long and prosper.

[END]

Mentioned in This Episode:

Dave Baldaro: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/davidbaldaro/?originalSubdomain=uk>

Creating a Legacy for Pel Hughes Through Innovation and Resilience with Brian Hughes:

<https://podcastsfromtheprinterverse.com/creating-a-legacy-with-brian-hughes/>

Full Service Solutions with Jay Mustafa, Thirst Creative: <https://>

podcastsfromtheprinterverse.com/full-service-solutions-with-jay-mustafa-thirst-creative/

The Sweet Success of Team Jansen ProServices with Rolf Schlösse: <https://>

podcastsfromtheprinterverse.com/the-sweet-success-of-team-jansen-proservices-with-rolf-schlösser/

Future of Personalization Demo: <https://url.xmpie.com/2d4>

XMPie: <https://www.xmpie.com/>

XMPie Events: <https://www.xmpie.com/about-xmpie/events>

XMPie Resource Library: <https://www.xmpie.com/resource-library>

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