

Automating a Century Old Print Business *PressWise Significantly Increases Throughput at Lawton Printers*

“We have seen a significant increase in the number of jobs that we can handle, due to the automation of PressWise.”



Founded in 1900, Lawton Printers is one of the oldest, continuous family-run printing businesses in the United States. With a rapid growth in the digital side of their business, they needed a solution to help improve throughput across their entire shop, so Lawton Printers turned to PressWise.



Company Name: Lawton Printers

Location: Orlando, FL

Business Type: Full Service Commercial Printer

Years In Business: 114

Website: www.lawtonprinters.com

[Lawton Printers](#) in downtown Orlando, Florida has a rich history of bringing value to its customers. Founded in 1900, it is one of the oldest, continuous family-run printing businesses in the United States. The current owners, Kimberly Lawton Koon, and her husband Tyler, represent the fifth generation to run the company.

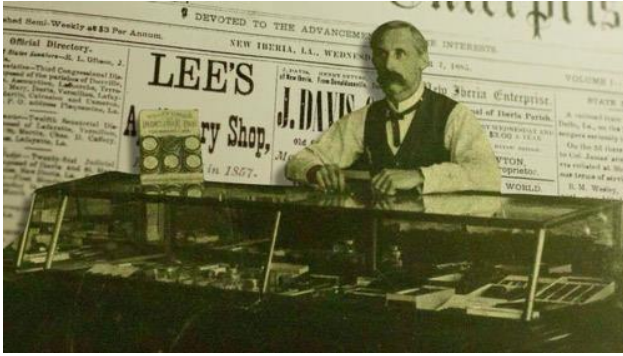
Kimberly's great, great grandfather, J.B. Lawton Sr. founded the business after prior experience printing and publishing a Louisiana newspaper, which he gave up after being shot by a disgruntled politician who took a strong dislike to one of his articles.

After a couple of years running a pineapple farm outside of Orlando which was brought to a halt by a big freeze, J.B. went back to what he knew best – printing.

This knowledge was passed from generation to generation, with each son beginning his training at an early age. J.B. Lawton's son Cestia ran the shop until 1948, followed by J.B. Lawton III until 1981, when Kimberly's father Ces Lawton took over.

When Kimberly heard her father was looking to pursue other interests in 2002, she and Tyler moved back to Orlando to get involved in the company, eventually purchasing the business from her father and maintaining the family lineage.

The Lawton Printers website notes that since the Kimberly and Tyler took ownership in 2005, “the company has continuously seen growth through new technology, new equipment, passion, and youth.”



Company founder, JB Lawton Sr.

A Plan For Growth

Lawton’s commitment to technology investment resulted in the company’s adoption of PressWise, the SaaS-based print workflow system from SmartSoft that includes web-to-print, MIS, and workflow automation capabilities.

They had outgrown their old web-to-print system and took the opportunity to reevaluate their entire workflow process.

Their goal was to improve the throughput through their facility with digital orders. Workflow automation was a top priority, especially minimizing the overhead on smaller jobs, as well as the ability to integrate the system with their accounting software.

As a 30-person shop, investing in a traditional expensive licensed system was daunting, while the subscription model for PressWise’s cloud-based solution allowed Lawton Printers to “dip a toe in the water.” Tyler Koon, Vice President, recalls evaluating four major MIS systems before selecting PressWise.

“We felt PressWise would provide the best solution going forward to integrate into our workflow”, explains Koon. “I also felt that PressWise was committed to expand its service offerings for future growth, allowing us to grow with it. Other systems either didn’t have successful installs or were not open-sourced, which didn’t fit well with us and our desire to have all of our equipment and systems communicating with each other.”

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An Automated Workflow

Lawton Printers currently uses PressWise primarily to manage the digital side of their business: digital storefronts, digital print, and digital large format jobs, as well as some offset jobs, mainly storefront items such as envelopes printed on a 2-color press.

Around 50% of Lawton Printers’ orders are processed through an online storefront. The company uses PressWise to generate both private customer-specific sites as well as online public storefronts, such as the innovative Mr. Scratch Off! site (see www.mrscratchoff.com) for custom-printed scratch-off cards.

We currently have 8 customers with their own custom storefronts and are looking to double that in the next 6-12 months. This is an area where we are looking for a lot of growth,” explains Koon.

PressWise has enabled Lawton Printers to streamline their production workflows through digitization and automation of orders. Storefront orders flow through PressWise into production without the need for further manual touches, greatly eliminating the overhead for each order and reducing turnaround times.



Kimberly Lawton Koon and Husband Tyler, the fifth generation to run Lawton Printers.

For those orders that enter the shop via a salesperson or CSR (customer sales representative), PressWise simplifies that process as well. Company sales reps use the PressWise browser-based estimating tool to easily generate quotes for clients from their office, the client site, or even on a mobile device, without the need to wait for a separate estimator in the company to do that for them.

Once a quote is accepted the CSR or sales rep can quickly enter that order in PressWise and send a PDF proof to the customer in a matter of minutes. After the customer reviews and approves the proof online, the CSR uses PressWise—which is integrated with HP Indigo’s SmartStream—to drop the order directly into the print queue for the HP Indigo 7500 digital press.

“PressWise has helped us reduce the overhead associated with a specific job. We can now process more orders through the shop and profitably process orders with a smaller dollar value. Roughly 60% of our digital jobs bypass prepress altogether.” notes Koon.

Hours and days of back-and-forth and manual touches have been eliminated from the process, reducing the time it takes to deliver orders and greatly improving the print experience for customers.

“We have seen a significant increase in the number of jobs per day/week [that we can handle] due to the automation of PressWise, and we are not even close to maxing out that part of the system yet”.

“We can now process more orders through the shop and profitably process orders with a smaller dollar value. Roughly 60% of our digital jobs bypass prepress altogether.”

The Power of a Superhero

At Lawton Printers, PressWise is an integral tool in the company’s mission to bring greater value to their customers. For companies ranging from Whole Foods and Harley Davidson to local little league teams doing fundraising activities, one way that Lawton Printers achieves this is through the use of a PressWise-generated storefront featuring a memorable superhero named Mr. Scratch Off!

Koon explains the concept behind the creative Mr. Scratch Off! website for ordering custom scratch-off tickets, bounce-back cards, and reward program promotions. “It is a way to get people to interact with print and help our customer get more

traction out of their printed piece, through bounce back into the store, discounting, etc.”

The site contains dozens of templates for customers to work with, or they can order entirely custom shapes, sizes, and designs. Through the PressWise-generated storefront customers can customize the content on the card, proof it online, and order it all through their browser. Order quantities on the Mr. Scratch Off! website typically range from 250 – 100,000s, but PressWise is enabling the company to test the profitability of orders as small as 10 cards.



PressWise Adds Value

Koon tells the story of how PressWise has enabled the company to more than triple its revenue from a particular customer in the education sector, who has a once-a-year project that lasts for 2-3 months. The process was very manual in nature and each year Lawton would simply hand over the printed pieces to the customer.

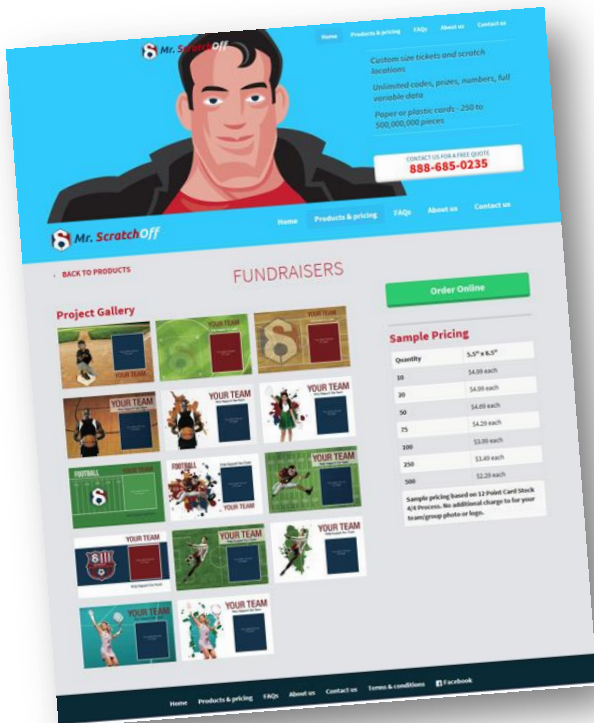
After implementing PressWise, Lawton Printers was able to provide the customer with a storefront for the project, add personalization to the pieces, and manage the fulfillment and delivery of the job. The entire project became substantially easier for the customer, and Lawton Printers became a more valuable vendor.

“The experience solidified the relationship for this year and the only thing we need to change is to update the customer storefront a little in anticipation of the ramp up,” explains Koon.

Advice for Others

Koon says that implementing PressWise was “a great opportunity to evaluate our processes and change them going forward.” He recommends that other printers form an employee team to map out their workflows and the problems they want to solve before they begin implementing a system and then build that system out in a linear fashion.

The Lawton Printers staff relies heavily on training videos from PressWise. If they have a problem they can’t solve, first they watch a relevant video and then, if necessary, they contact the PressWise support team. Koon encourages his staff to reach out



The Mr. ScratchOff Website

to PressWise for assistance as soon as they start to struggle with a problem. He recommends that printers give their staff a time limit on how long they should spend trying to figure out a solution themselves before turning to PressWise for help.

“PressWise has been extremely responsive and easy to deal with. They have shown a real willingness for us to be successful,” concludes Koon.

Employees are freed from many repetitive tasks and are able to focus on more fulfilling, revenue-producing activities.



Some happy Lawton employees

Koon also notes that using PressWise has helped some of his employees better understand how the print industry is changing. When some have been hesitant about the company adopting automation, he has reassured them that “automation is for competitive reasons, not job displacement.”

Employees are freed from many repetitive tasks and are able to focus on more fulfilling, revenue-producing activities. Koon says that after working with PressWise they come to understand “how we are a progressive company that can offer a better print experience than a lot of our competition.”



Kimberly inspects a new job on the shop floor at Lawton

Find Out More

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Call: 888.227.7221

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