



FINAL DELIVERABLE
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For this Climate Smart Project, our D.studio group chose to work with a local printing house called Metropolitan Fine Printers. A 3 year returner to the Climate Smart program, Met Fine Printers commits itself to producing high-quality products by using extremely sustainable, cutting edge processes and technologies. Our goal with this project was to collaborate with Scott Gray, VP Branding, and identify an area of opportunity which we could help the company enhance their position as a green leader in the industry. The backdrop to this project was the Vancouver Green City Goals, specifically the ones related to the economy. These goals acted as the cornerstones of our project by reminding us that this entire process (learning, educating, recommending) would ultimately help achieve these targets.

TARGETS:

1. **DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF GREEN JOBS OVER 2010 LEVELS BY 2020.**
2. **DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF COMPANIES THAT ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN GREENING THEIR OPERATIONS OVER 2011 LEVELS BY 2020.**

VIDEO LINK

UBC D.Studio: Met Fine Printers

http://youtu.be/mxVUh_oWyXE



SWOT

Our team SWOT was very interesting to compile. We had several similarities and a few differences which reflected our overall ability to work together in a team.

It became evident over our meetings that our busy individual schedules would be a point of issue for the group scheduling. We also had different people step up at different times to be a leader to build that opportunity.

<i>STRENGTHS</i>	<i>WEAKNESSES</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team players - good communication skills, draw on previous team project experiences • Views from different perspectives, e.g. each member in different specialization • Good at problem solving, critical thinking, and analytical mindset • Creative Reasoning • Good presentation skills • Speaks mind when they have a logical opinion • Good mediator - strive to bring people together by promoting collaboration; motivate others to participate • Decision making - ability to "keep the ball rolling" adapt to changing circumstances and execute a plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to do too many activities at once. Need to better manage time and prioritize. • Busy schedules means everyone might not be able to meet at the same time. • Strong willed individuals • Little understanding of green initiatives • Tendency to lack motivation if given too much time to complete task • ESL – may not communicate in the most eloquent way • Analytical Skills – could work on using improving research skills to use data to support opinion • Burning out - spreading too thin to not complete tasks/forget important things
<i>OPPORTUNITIES</i>	<i>THREATS</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being surrounded by other bright students. Trends in sustainability = opportunity to gain knowledge in the green business sector • Opportunity to work directly with a company and their clients in a simulating environment – draw on their expertise and take advantage of their networks • Utilization of Sauder school resources; workshops on branding, networking info sessions, and co-op • Books/News/Articles/Techniques- be open to new ideas/ ways of thinking to better understand a concept • Professors - build connections to learn and discover passions/opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Busy schedules could limit opportunity for team bonding • Perceptions of our work as “students” not credible enough • Growing competition among classmates – fear of being overshadowed or out performed in deliverables • Competitive nature of students all seeking similar careers (where some are better connected in the industry) • Native English Speakers as competition • Limited amounts of time/\$/resources to pursue ALL opportunities • Constrained by schedule of company – could slow down our progress

TECHNIQUES

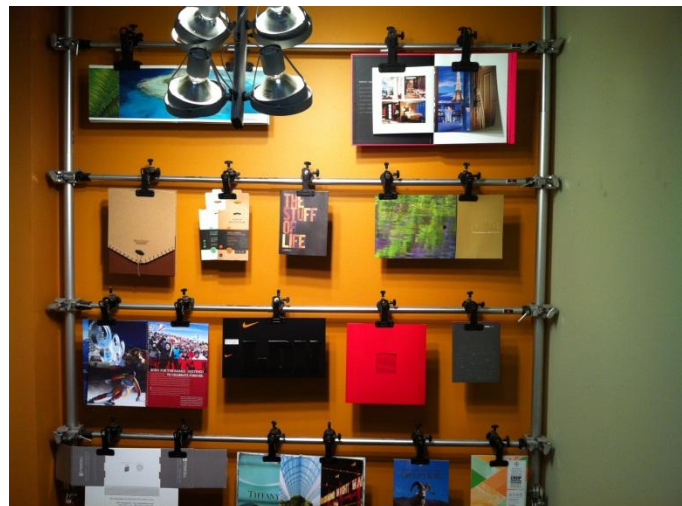
In creating this project we were challenged from the very beginning of the process, and the use of multiple strategic thinking techniques became very valuable.

Even before meeting with the client, we started by getting together and using **assumption dumption** as a starting point to our project. We went into Met Fine Printers with these preliminary assumptions which will be described below.

Meeting with Scott Gray was our first opportunity to evaluate our assumptions – we were correct that finding new ways for Met Fine to be sustainable would be extremely difficult, given their involvement with the Climate Smart Program. We also assumed that maximizing Scott’s involvement in the co-creation process was going to be a challenge as he had a very busy schedule. It was after conducting our focus group that we realized our main assumption of clients willing to pay a premium for more sustainable solutions was wrong.

During our initial tour of Met Fine Printers office and warehouse, we had a chance not only to evaluate our assumptions, but also to use **Observation** and **Eye Phone** techniques. We documented our findings by taking photos and videos with our cell phones, and taking low-tech notes (we used pen and paper this time). Materials gathered during that session were a remarkable resource, which we used as a reference point to reflect on what we learned that day.

From the first day of working on the project we were asking plenty of questions. We even began to question our questions and question our answers! The technique which we found helpful to direct the flow of these questions was the **Five Whys and Six Universal Questions** technique. Asking who, what, when, where, why, and how was a constant theme of our work, while the answers to those common questions were changing throughout the creation process. Asking the same set of questions before meeting with Mr. Grey brought us to different answers than asking them before conducting our focus group, while every instance was equivalently helpful.



Asking the question **How Might We** also allowed us to look at the problem from a different, fresh perspective. We used that question to find the optimal solution to each of our micro-goals. Starting with the general question “how might we deliver to Scott something tangible? We narrowed down the possible paths by asking “how might we achieve the main

goal of X”, and eliminating infeasible ones by asking “how might we conduct/do/make Y”. These questions helped our group decide on using a focus group as a case study method, and also picking the right people to participate in the focus group/ interviews.

Realizing the power of design in thinking techniques, we decided to incorporate **Story Share** and **Word Association** in the focus group study. Both methods brought interesting results, and helped in engaging the participants.

ASSUMPTIONS & HYPOTHESIS

The general stereotype for sustainability revolves around high cost and extensive production methods. For a company to produce environmentally friendly products, an assumption of added premiums co-exist with regular production costs – leading to a more expensive selling price.

In an industry where printing is part of the value proposition, consumers do not immediately align sustainability to this name. The general assumption is that printing means the use of large quantities of paper and toxic inks, which comes from cutting down and processing of trees and non-renewable chemicals, therefore leading to non-environmentally friendly practices. Consumers then come to a conclusion that the printing industry and sustainability initiatives are mutually exclusive in nature.

An assumption was also made that companies did not include outsourced printing as part of their core corporate strategy. Instead of attempting to adopt a ‘green’ brand by choosing a sustainable printing firm, companies wanted their print jobs to be done quickly and efficiently, at the lowest possible cost. This may have come as a direct result of the apparent disconnect between printing and sustainability in the mind of the consumer.

After touring the Met Fine Printers’ operations facility, we came out more educated and in awe of the level of complexity sustainable printing companies deal with in order to produce environmentally friendly products. We felt that due to this uneducated misperception of the printing industry, consumers may need to become more familiar with sustainable printing methodologies before a shift in mindset and awareness can occur.

On top of the present misperception, we believed that consumers viewed sustainability as the art of saving paper, trees and minimizing pollution. We did not believe consumers were educated that printing can be done with ‘MET Enviro UV inks, Zero VOC emissions, and coatings are 100% VOC Free. UV inks do not skin up on press and require far less cleanup on press compared to conventional “vegetable based” inks.’ (Met Fine Printers, 2012)



Fast throughput of print work, remember, it is dry the second it comes off the press so no need to wait for “drying time”. MET UV inks allow us to print in a single press pass where other conventional print shops need multiple passes.

- *Unbelievable Matte to Gloss ratio varnishes and coatings*
- *Textured and reticulated Matte finishes*
- *Soft Touch Coatings*
- *Crystal clear reproduction on uncoated paper, think of wet ink on dry ink and virtually NO Dry-back. Now do you get the picture? (* Not so secret, this is how all of the paper companies make those gorgeous paper sample books. Yea, we’ve helped them too)*
- *100% recycled uncoated papers print beautifully! yes, they can be just as beautiful as virgin paper. *we know how to optimize your job for any surface.*
- *MET Enviro UV is perfect for printing on plastic and other synthetic substrates. MET has specially configured our MAN Roland UV presses to maximize our ability to print synthetic and plastics in a single press pass with rock solid results.*
- *Specialty packaging coatings and FX.*



We believe that this message should be communicated more widely and effectively in order to allow the consumer to differentiate Met Fine Printers from other companies in the printing industry.

METHODOLOGY

Through our design process our main discovery was that Met Fine Printers was not communicating their brand message effectively. This brand message was a union of quality products and sustainable printing processes. After discovering this we decided that in order for Met Fine to become clear on its brand message it needed to become clear on the perceptions of consumers. Our initial idea in regards to this was to conduct a survey. However after further research we decided that although a survey generates a lot of data, we needed more ‘qualitative’ rather than ‘quantitative’ data. Defining perceptions is something that would be difficult in the form of a survey. After making this initial assessment we decided that a focus group and interview process would be best to generate the information required.

FOCUS GROUP

We decided a focus group would be the ideal tool to gather and discover qualitative and descriptive information. Focus groups provide a unique opportunity to develop discussion and gather rich qualitative information on the perceptions and feelings of the participants. One of the risks with conducting a focus group is that it can create skewed information based on the questions presented and where the discussion can lead. Subsequently our main challenge was to ensure we did not ask leading questions. Another major problem with focus groups is it can create a large group-think atmosphere. We mitigated these concerns by raising the questions of sustainability and green concerns more towards the

end of the focus group in order to not skew the message of participants. In addition we attempted to create questions in which the participants were forced to tell their own experiences to avoid the negative effects of group think.

Participants

We had four participants attend the focus group. All were marketing or communications managers of not-for-profit organizations in the UBC community. Having a very specifically defined focus group was both an advantage and a hindrance. For one, it clearly defined the scope of the focus group and allowed the group to have a very specific focus as they had similar circumstances. However, it also meant that the participants all were very cost conscious when purchasing printed material, which could have skewed the findings of the focus group.

INTERVIEWS

The second technique we used in our research study was interviews of different marketing personnel in the Vancouver community. We decided this would give us a more holistic perspective and mitigate some of the risks associated with focus groups. Through this process we chose a number of clients that Scott provided as well as connections in our own personal networks. These interviews allowed us to also understand the perspectives of purchases in the for profit sector and develop a more realistic view of industry perceptions.

The focus group and interviews gave us some very qualitative information that we were able to use to assume the perceptions of the printing industry as well as the goals MET Fine should strive towards.

SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS – WHAT DID WE LEARN

After synthesizing the information gathered in our focus group and interviews, we summarized our findings into 4 main takeaways:

- 1) Sustainability is an expectation, not a Point of Differentiation
- 2) Sustainability, a “product” not a “process”
- 3) QPS (quality, price, sustainability relationship)
- 4) Customer Service is King

SUSTAINABILITY IS AN EXPECTATION

The first perception that we identified was that sustainability is an expectation in the printing industry. Many of our clients shared that throughout their experience in searching for a printer, the feature of sustainability was very common. Compared to several years ago, when only a small number of printing houses boasted sustainability as a point of difference, there is virtually no printing company that isn't “sustainable”. This leads to our discovery of what the audience defined as “sustainable”.

SUSTAINABILITY, A “PRODUCT” NOT A “PROCESS”

When we asked our interviewees about how they can tell a printing company is sustainable, the unanimous identifiers were 1) FSC certified and 2) recycled paper. Given that they were all marketing managers, this makes sense as it relates to the physical nature of the end product. They knew very little about the sustainable *process* behind the product. We believe this is because almost all of our interviewees outsource their large printing runs through an agency therefore they have an indirect relationship with the printer. We believe this also explains why printing companies are not viewed as strategic partners. This poses an issue, but also an opportunity as it gives Met the chance to market their internal processes (UV activated inks, ink and paper recycling process, waste management) as points of difference which will set them apart in the consumers mind.

QPS (QUALITY, PRICE, SUSTAINABILITY RELATIONSHIP)

These three words were dominant pillars in our discussion with our focus group and interview attendees. We discovered through question 3 (Appendix 1) that Quality and Price held priority over sustainability. Subsequently from question 9 we discovered that clients would be willing to pay a premium for *quality*, and not sustainability. This was a major contrast to our initial assumption. Price and sustainability actually had a relatively inverse relationship. One interviewee described a time when she received a quote for a printing job on recycled paper that was actually less expensive than if she used non-recycled paper. In contrast to our initial assumption, sustainability and price have a seemingly inverse relationship. In addition, clients agreed that quality and sustainability are not mutually exclusive. Interestingly, they also recognized that sustainability means a different thing in regards to high end and everyday products. When we asked them what they could do to make their smaller runs more sustainable, they identified that they would be willing to decrease the size of the piece “i.e. number of pages in the booklet” but not the amount of copies. When we asked how they could make their more important runs more sustainable, they pointed to the material and how long it would last. This shows there is opportunity for co-creation between the designer and the printing company to ensure that quality and quantity are both optimized – a price saving and tree/ink saving, win-win situation.

CUSTOMER SERVICE IS KING

The most critical finding throughout our research was that customer service is the #1 decision making factor for maintaining a strong relationship with a printing company. While price, quality, and sustainability are all very important, it is superior customer service that the clients remember and that ultimately sets companies in the printing industry apart. The interviewees distinguished the difference between “great customer service” that was expected for high end products and low end products:

High end: “Bend over backwards”

- Flexibility
- Ability to work around strict or impromptu deadlines
- Meet in person
- Willingness to collaborate
- Friendly
- Attentive to needs

Everyday: “Quick and Easy”

- Self Service
- All information on website
- Timely
- Accuracy

CO-CREATION PROCESS

We were lucky to work with Scott who is a person who’s passionate about his job and loves what he’s doing, this is apparent in the way he speaks about his company. He was very easy to work with because he was responsive to emails and often replied within a 2 hour frame of sending an original email.

COMPANY TOUR

We started by having Melissa send him an email to see if we could meet up with Scott to discuss Met fine. He then invited us to do a company tour. The tour of the building was amazing; we got to see everything including the double presses, ink machines, final products for clients, the workspace and even the back alley to show that even though they had a trash bin there was nothing in it (carbon neutral.) During this time period we took notes of what Scott was saying as well as pictures of things along the tour that Scott identified as non-sensitive.

After Scott explained the process to us, we headed to the boardroom of the building and had a solid two hour conversation with him. From there we sat down and hashed out how we could help him relative to the Climate Smart training program we took part in; we saw that his company was already very green. He ended up suggesting that he wanted to work on conveying the company’s sustainability without sacrificing the reputation of their quality and wanted to have a sustainable boutique type feeling.

PHONE CALL #1

After looking at the project for a week we realized that what we wanted to do in three weeks time was overly ambitious and vague and had to be clarified. After sitting down and defining our scope to something more feasible we contacted Scott again. He was excited to know that we wanted to do a focus group and suggested several people he wanted

information from. We also managed to establish at this point that targeting the UBC not-for-profit area was a niche that Scott didn't have as much market power in with a lot of potential.

FOCUS GROUP

We realized a bit late that we should have asked a representative from Met Fine to attend the focus group as an observer. By the time we asked Scott if he wanted to attend, his schedule was too busy to allow him to attend. However, he did provide us with 2 questions that we could use in the focus group.

1. "Would you pay a small premium to know that your project is produced in a verified exceptionally sustainable manner? "
2. "If yes, approximately how much of a premium would you be willing to pay?"
 - a. 2%
 - b. 3%
 - c. 5%
 - d. 10%
 - e. Other __%

Melissa went to pick up samples that we could use in our focus group.

INTERVIEWS

After various meetings with Scott he shared what he thought were the necessary files to update our knowledge. These files included an Environmental job flow chart, Market Research Q+A (used for web redesign from last year), Green doc, MET White Paper, Article on environmental printing inks and last year's Climate Smart Report. He also gave us four contacts from his own network for us to interview. It was unfortunate that we were never able to utilize the interview contacts due to various reasons including busy schedules.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After fully synthesizing our findings from the focus group and interviewing process we were able to develop a number of recommendations for Met Fine moving forward in communicating its brand message.

CUSTOMER SERVICE AS NEW DIFFERENTIATOR

A major finding in both the focus groups and interviews was that excellent customer service was something most potential customers are looking for. After discussing their best experiences in relation to commissioning a large print job, it was a consensus that superior

customer service was something they all wanted in this process. This is something we are recommending to Met Fine as a new point of differentiation for them. From our industry research it became apparent that sustainability was now something perceived as standard and therefore no longer a point of differentiation. Therefore we are recommending that Met Fine redefine its customer service policies to give themselves a new unique feature in this marketplace. There are two main areas that the participants deemed important for customer service: high end products & every day products.

High-End Products

In the focus group the participants defined these products as ones that would only be printed once/twice a year and were of a higher print quality for marketing purposes. Their needs for customer service in this area was mainly defined as a company that would 'bend over backwards' for their needs. They wanted a company who was willing to fully attend to their needs in the co creation process and develop a product that met all of their needs. In addition they also expressed a requirement to have an accurate and time efficient process.

Everyday Products

These products were defined by the participants and simple brochures, business cards and other everyday products that required little design or creation process. For these products they wanted to be able to develop and order these products online without having to go through the hassle of meeting and developing the product with the company. They wanted all these services at the touch of a button.

We believe that if Met Fine is able to develop their customer service standards in a way that meets these needs of consumers they will be able to provide a new differentiator for themselves in the industry. Met Fine must communicate that it can provide high quality products of a boutique, yet still be affordable, timely and sustainable.

EDUCATION THROUGH CUSTOMER SERVICE

It became apparent in the focus group that the customers procuring Met Fine's products do not have enough of an education of the printing industry and process to be able to differentiate Met Fine's services beyond other fine printers in the industry. Customers do not understand the difference between UV vs. Vegetable based inks or the other processes Met Fine uses to differentiate itself. Therefore in order to keep these efforts as a point of difference for their business they need to work on educating their consumer base. We believe the best method for educating the consumer is through the superior customer service they provide. Most of the participants in the focus group used a designer who they assumed to have the knowledge of the printing industry in order to purchase their printed goods. It is therefore crucial that Met Fine educate these designers to ensue a trickle down effect which will continue to give them that point of difference in the industry.

REFLECTION

Our process for developing this project is a bit scattered in retrospect. We started off with wanting to help portray the brand message that Scott desired and didn't realize that our scope was too large until we discussed it with Moura and Angele. After a lot of discussion we realized we couldn't really do that if we didn't know what kind of brand message consumers were looking for – so we decided that our goal was to figure out what consumers were looking for.

At first, we were going to do a generic survey, but during our constructive criticism studio time, we were bluntly told that that was simple and ineffective for what we wanted to achieve. So we looked at other tools available and decided that focus groups would be interesting to try out. Stephanie had also taken a course that did focus groups previously and she took the leadership role in trying to help us keep it as unbiased (focused on not having leading questions) and goal setting to know exactly what we wanted out of the focus group.

It was also difficult to come up with a final deliverable when we had no clue of what our results were going to be. This is where our assumptions came heavily into play. Assuming that we learned something from the focus group, assuming that the focus group was successful, we decided that we were going to just do a report at first. However, Lang insisted that because we were in a class full of other creative people that we should step outside the box a bit more and try for something more creative. So we decided that a report paired with a blackboard voiced over video would be an interesting deliverable. However, Veronica was kind of sceptical about the amount of time left we had to make a video. We collaborated then as a team to set a timeline to make sure that this was a realistic project and stuck with it.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this project was a great opportunity for us to test out all the techniques learned throughout the D.studio term. It has been a true pleasure to collaborate with Scott and Met Fine on such an in depth level. Our group has learned an immense amount not only about the printing industry, but also the complexity which comes along with achieving sustainable goals. It was the first time many of us had co-created anything with a business and it was a very enriching process. Understanding perceptions of a business proved to be more difficult than expected, but we believe with the techniques and methods we used, we were able to gather tangible, valuable information that Scott could use to better communicate Met Fine's brand. As group members, we will be walking away with new ways of thinking and the experience of applying various strategic design techniques. We hope our research was beneficial to Scott, and we look forward to building on the skills developed throughout the process.

APPENDIX I – FOCUS GROUP OUTLINE

FOCUS GROUP OUTLINE:

Friday, Nov. 16th HA 195

12:00 – 1:30pm

Four focus group participants: Marketing Managers of Not for Profits in the UBC community

- Introduction and Waivers

Part 1: *Build Rapport*

- Introduce yourself
- State Job title/role description
- Company you work for
- Define company's scope of outsourced printing (type, quantity and frequency)

Part 2: *Provoke Discussion*

- Story telling:
 - Describe the last experience you had when working with a printing company and identify 1 highlight and 1 lowlight.
 - Identify the top 3 decision making factors in choosing this printing company
 - How would you rank Quality, Sustainability, and Price in terms of importance when choosing a printing company?
 - Have you thought about what this partnership says about your company/brand/products?
- Word Association:
 - Write down the top 5 words that you associate with the following:
 - printing industry
 - boutique
 - paper
 - ink
 - sustainability
- *Perceptions:*
 - Here we have some samples of promotional print material. What can you say about the quality of these pieces? Do you expect this type of quality from your printed material?
 - Based on the look and feel, how sustainable do you think these pieces are?
 - On a scale of 1-10, how expensive do you think these pieces are?
 - Would you pay a small premium to know that your project is produced in a verified exceptionally sustainable manner? If yes, approximately how much

of a premium would you be willing to pay?: 2%, 3%, 5%, 10%, other?

Part 3: *Summarize/draw conclusions*

- Company X synopsis:
 - Imagine that we represent company X (Met Fine). Their value proposition promises quality products produced in a sustainable manner. How do you think that company X should deliver their message of both quality and sustainability?

- Thank and End

APPENDIX 2 – DEFINITION'S OF HIGH END & EVERYDAY PRODUCTS

High end products (high quality, low frequency)

- Magazine: 2x year 180,000 each issue
- Catalogues
- Season Brochures: 10,000 – 15,000
- Annual reports (online)
- Yearbook
- Agenda books
- Special event programs

Everyday products (lower quality, higher frequency, and quick turnaround)

- Postcards
- Invitations (e-invitations)
- Booklets (1500-3000)
- Flyers
- Posters

APPENDIX 3 – WORD ASSOCIATION

Word Association Words

- Printing Industry
 - Paper
 - Ink
 - Presses
 - Shipping
 - Money
 - Varied services
 - Business hungry
 - Technology
 - Efficient
 - Hands on
 - Knowledge
 - FSC
 - Paper Stock
 - Colour codes
- Boutique
 - Small
 - Cheap
 - Shopping
 - Exclusive
 - Costly
 - Outlet
 - Quality
 - Detail-oriented
 - Customer-centric
 - Intimate
 - Exclusive
 - Small-Scaled
 - Service
 - Quick
- Paper
 - Weight
 - FSC
 - Gloss
 - Media
 - Magazines
 - Design
 - Texture
 - Trees
 - Scarce
 - Weight

- Texture
 - Recycled
 - Trees
 - White
 - Print
- Ink
 - Black
 - Toner
 - Expensive
 - Dye
 - Colour
 - Expensive
 - Black
 - Thick
 - Tattoos
 - Vegetable
 - Refill
 - Colour
 - Absorb
 - Colour codes
- Sustainability
 - Strive
 - Challenge
 - Necessary
 - Trees
 - Recycle
 - Future
 - Planet
 - Nature
 - Responsible
 - Environment
 - Ecology
 - FSC
 - Paper Stock

APPENDIX 4 – PICTURES

