



## ▶ Simplifying a Complex Design

An online printing service organization provided a very powerful application for its clients to create customized advertising merchandise and printed media online. End users could create layouts, color schemes using a library of standard and unique fonts to print on promotional items like mugs, t-shirts, stationary and other advertising collateral. Users had the ability to select images from the application’s existing library or upload their own individual artwork.

### The Challenge

Their application had one large flaw – it was a very complex program for the average user. The design creation process was difficult to follow and the site’s navigation was not user friendly. Users not only needed to understand the application but they need to follow a rigid process in order to design their final artwork. In addition, the server response time was slow and users would experience delays in the design process. The result was a frustrated user and a low number of returning clients. It was necessary to completely revamp the user interface and improve the customer’s design experience to increase sales. They called on Emtec to implement a new self-service interface that was more user-friendly.

### Emtec’s Solution

The new web interface was ideal for consumers and small business owners with minimal design experience. A tab-based GUI interface with dynamic tabs that change based on the selected product was built to provide quick and easy navigation of the site. The solution features real-time product proofs with an accurate drag-and-drop editor that allows for user control of positioning of elements in their final design.

The application also included attributes like undo/redo for quick design modifications, right-click pop-up menus

and spell check. Emtec also programmed graphic enhancements including snap-to-grid capabilities, a lasso feature to select multiple design elements and the ability to resize graphics just by using the click and drag of a mouse. A searchable graphics library was also developed so users can access additional images to add to their own artwork for their final designs.

Programmed in AJAX, the application allows for better response time and improved interaction. Server trips are converted to AJAX calls reducing the amount of page refreshes, browser refreshes and go-back issues. Other technologies utilized include: HTML and JavaScript, Perl, and Microsoft SQL Server.

### Outcome

The new GUI allows users to see all design features on a single screen, making it easy for clients to see all the features available to them. End users experience less “hang time” as the program needs fewer server trips and less time to reload. The new graphics capabilities eliminate the need to navigate in sequential, incremental steps and allow for a more fluid experience. The culmination of all the new features and capabilities has given the end user a more positive experience in creating promotional items and collateral. The enhanced application and improved end-user experience has helped both retain and expand their customer base.

### About Emtec

Established in 1964, Emtec, Inc. is a systems integrator that provides IT services and products to the federal, state, local, education and commercial markets. Our market leading value-based management methods, coupled with best-in-class IT technology, consulting and development services, address a wide range of specific client needs, as well as support broader IT transformation initiatives. Emtec’s service capabilities span the United States, Canada and countries around the globe.