

Adapting During COVID-19

Yale Printing & Publishing Services

Our Organization :

YPPS received word that Yale University was shutting down operations and only essential workers would be allowed on campus from March to May 31st. Unfortunately, timing couldn't have been worse. We were having a good year with revenue up 5.2% and financially were trending towards a profit. Then COVID-19 hit. With revenue decreasing by 42% and only a few of our staff coming in for essential services (payroll), we all wondered what the future of our organization would be. The only alternative was to adapt and become as relevant as we could during this crisis. The list below highlights some of ways we accomplished this.

Staffing the PPE Project:

Yale decided to open in stages on June 1st and created an application process by which labs and other employees needed to be approved to come back to work. Yale needed to provide PPE so that there would be a safe work environment. Procurement, with the help of Emergency Health and Safety, were tasked with sourcing PPE and distribution. This is where YPPS came in.

- The number of applicants far outweighed the resources that EHS had so YPPS volunteered to help.
- YPPS reached out to its staff and mobilized two work units.
- One unit on site (after applying to return) worked staggered shifts to keep distanced.
- One unit who would be working from home after we supplied them with materials.

COVID guidelines restricted us to only having 50% of our work unit on site so YPPS had to adapt to those restrictions. Staff onsite were required to take a Daily Health check and ID usage was monitored via doors and bathrooms. We took our empty conference room and lunch area and turned it into socially distanced work space which enabled us to function under the COVID guidelines set forth by the University.

Accounts Payable and Payroll:

One of the essential duties that was required by Yale was that their accounts payable and payroll systems remain operational during the quarantine. Staff for both departments was severely taxed and YPPS offered to assist them.

- YPPS established a two-day schedule to consolidate and run all checks and deposits.
- YPPS coordinated pickups with both departments to ensure a safe and secure transition.

School of Drama Print Portal:

The School of Drama reached out to us to see if YPPS could do their printing for them because there would not be any staff there to run the copiers they had on the premises. We set up a Zoom call with the administrator tasked with finding a solution and came up with the following plan.

- YPPS created a website with a folder specifically for Drama to link to.
- YPPS asked that students or admins fill out the order form we created with the details of their job and drop their print ready PDF's into this folder.
- YPPS agreed to next day turnaround and delivery by 12:00 PM if we received files before midnight the day before.
- The print jobs were then delivered to a specified location at the school where they were picked up by the students and admins who submitted them.

Overall, this adaptive solution for The School of Drama has been a remarkable success and an example of how we, as an in-plant, must come up with creative solutions to the unique and tough times that COVID has created for our industry. Each one of the examples on adaptability that we put forth did not exist before this pandemic hit but I'm sure in-plants throughout the country know that the key to survival and staying relevant is their ability to adapt. That ability will surely be tested in the upcoming months but that's what YPPS has been doing for the last 30 + years and with a little bit of creativity and effort, YPPS will remain to be a valuable asset to Yale University.