Workflow by Design

Integration of online collaboration software into custom workflow

Ad agencies, consumer products companies and retailers need fast, reliable, interactive, and intuitive online proofing and approval solutions for packaging and point of sale materials to **improve turnaround**, **reduce costs**, and **shorten time to market**.

Workflow by Design (WBD) relies on Vproof from Viki Solutions as one of the go-to tools it has integrated into its suite of hosted workflow services. Specifically designed for packaging, print, and brand management, Vproof lets designers, copywriters, art directors, marketing and brand managers, and print providers **collaborate in real-time**, ensuring that ads, flyers, labels, displays, packaging, and more **meet deadlines** and **stay on budget**.

Customers use Workflow by Design as a central data repository for all elements of a job to foster communication and ensure products reach stores on schedule. To make this work, WBD needed to streamline the design and approval process for household name customers such as BJ's Wholesale Club, The North Face, and Vans. WBD had been using **Kodak RealTimeProof (RTP)**, but needed faster, more robust tools to support customers' increasing demands.

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Company Profile

Workflow by Design provides hosted graphic design and production workflow services that enable real-time collaboration among users in leading consumer product companies, retailers, advertising agencies, and design firms. Workflow by Design's customers include BJ's Wholesale Club, Dunkin' Brands, The North Face, Vans, The Scotts Company, Smart & Final, and more.

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Unlike other online proofing tools, Vproof's **sophisticated API** connects directly to Workflow by Design's systems, providing **faster connectivity** and smoother, more **advanced functionality**. The API is the key differentiator that enables WBD to automate customers' production processes with online proofing and adapt to meet specific customer needs, further improving the efficiency of their workflow systems.

Online collaboration

"We work with the entire production chain. Our customers include brand owners, art directors, designers, advertising and marketing agencies, retailers, and printers," explains Maria Dubuc, Owner and Director of Workflow by Design. "There are many steps involved in the design and production of packages and labels. The artwork is just one piece of the puzzle."
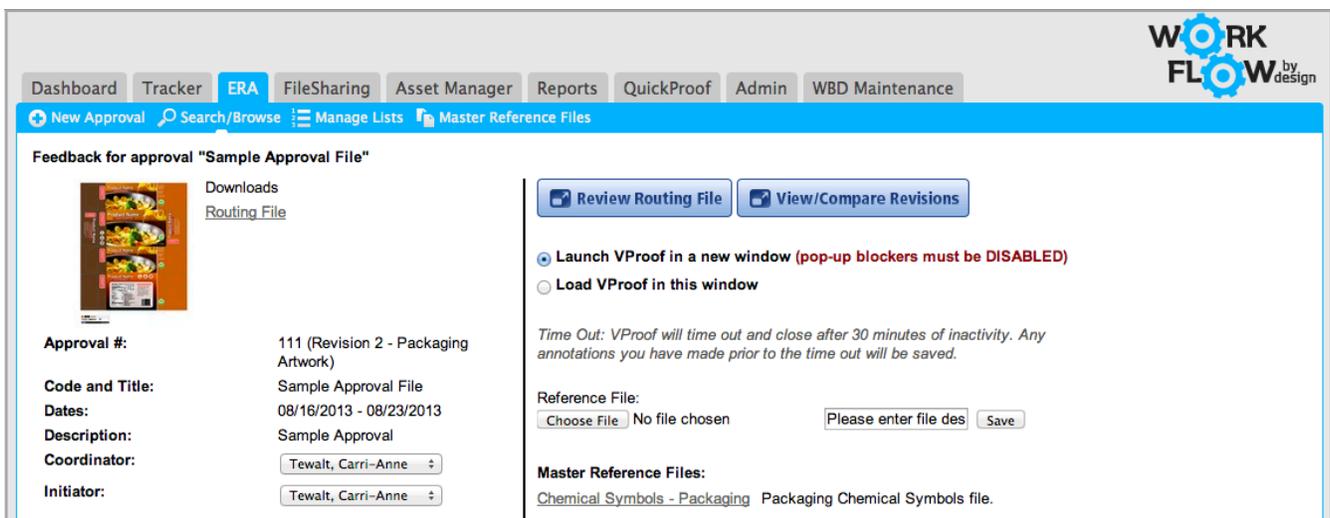
For example, a package or label may include descriptive copy, ingredients, nutritional information, warnings, and more. Then there are print specifications ranging from the kind of container to the types of substrates. Some information may even vary by market. Different people are responsible for each element—and they need all this information to be readily accessible, and must be able to **track every job from concept through production**. Vproof fosters collaboration to keep all parties in the loop and helps ensure every element is accurate and that jobs stay on schedule.

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"A powerful hosted workflow is the best way to deliver efficient production and accelerate time to market," affirms Dubuc. "Vproof helps make each step in our workflow faster for our customers and reduces the chance of costly errors."

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Vproof gives every individual involved in a project access to the entire process. Copy, images, artwork, and even video can be accessed, reviewed, annotated, revised, edited, compared, and circulated for approval—providing a closed-loop process that engages everyone involved. Vproof's advanced proofing tools ensure that colors, fonts and graphics will not cause problems when being RIPed and printed. Because Vproof is entirely web-based, it does not need to be installed onto corporate servers or individual computers. It can also be used on tablets and smartphones, enabling an "always on" level of access that **streamlines workflows** and **increases accuracy** and **efficiency**.

Partnership benefits

WBD had previously used software tools with some of the same features and capabilities, but which lacked the **depth**, **flexibility**, and **adaptability** customers were seeking. "We would ask for support or to have a feature integrated into the product—often something our clients were asking for," recalls Dubuc. "But it could take months before the change would be implemented. With Viki Solutions, changes can often be implemented right away. Viki Solutions has truly partnered with us. They understand our needs and respond promptly to help us satisfy our customers' needs."

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Such fast response is possible because Vproof was designed from its inception as an all-encompassing **collaborative online tool** for simultaneous use by multiple people. Created by industry professionals with a deep understanding of the needs of users throughout the creative and production value chain, Vproof has the flexibility to accommodate change and adapt to users' needs.

Viki Solutions developers are constantly integrating what they learn from WBD and other partners, enabling them to **continually enhance** Vproof and add to its capabilities. This is a vital element of Viki Solutions' approach to partnering with customers: every change, every addition is part of a collaboration that keeps making Vproof more capable and more powerful.

Speed is critical

"Anyone who has spent any time on the creative or agency side knows that speed is of the essence," says Dubuc. "Time is money, and speed to market is always critical. Vproof is three times faster than our previous RealTimeProof module, and that has a huge impact on our customers' time-sensitive workflows. With Vproof and a partner like Viki Solutions we're able to help our customers meet their deadlines."

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As Workflow by Design's customers have made the shift to using Vproof, Dubuc notes, "Implementing change can always be a challenge, but once we showed them everything Vproof could provide and how **easy** it was **to use**, the change was a logical move. Vproof is very intuitive so they needed only minimal training to set it up the way they preferred."

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Compelling Vproof features, such as the ability to **compare different versions** to view changes, reply to comments, and zoom in on artwork to a very high level of detail are especially important. Users can clearly annotate virtually any element in a layout and provide instructions or comments needed to ensure accurate production.

Annotations can also be compiled into reports to provide a history of a job's path through production. Additionally, Vproof can operate

in over 60 languages including right-to-left languages—which helps support Workflow by Design's customers globally.

> **Vproof does this better than any of its competitors and helps to keep our customers satisfied. It makes our solutions more robust, faster, smarter, and adds value to our offerings.**

"Great software is hard to achieve," muses Dubuc. "It's important to simplify as much as you can while still providing all the necessary functionality. Vproof does this better than any of its competitors and helps to keep our customers satisfied. It makes our solutions more robust, faster, smarter, and adds value to our offerings."

Viki Solutions

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Viki Solutions specializes in custom workflow and online proofing for commercial print, packaging, publishing, brand and digital asset management companies. Founded in 2010 by a team of expert developers with extensive knowledge in the graphic communications industry, Viki offers flexible and innovative products that are constantly evolving to meet customer needs.