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Avalon Copy expanding appellate division

By Kevin Tampone

Journal Staff

SYRACUSE — Avalon Copy Centers is expanding its appellate-publishing division in response to strong demand for the unit's work.

The division handles the preparation and production of documents that law firms file with the state's appellate courts, says Jonathan Denney, Avalon president. Each court has its own rules and preferences for how documents should be prepared.

Avalon is well versed in the practices of all the different courts, which has helped drive customers to the division, he says.

"We can do turnkey service where we completely prep the record or we can take a record that's already been prepared by a law firm and just do the copying and binding service," Denney says. "There [has] been really wild growth on that side of the business.

"As people get to know us, they trust our level of quality and service. That's why we get the phone calls. We're getting so much work. We needed to increase our capacity."

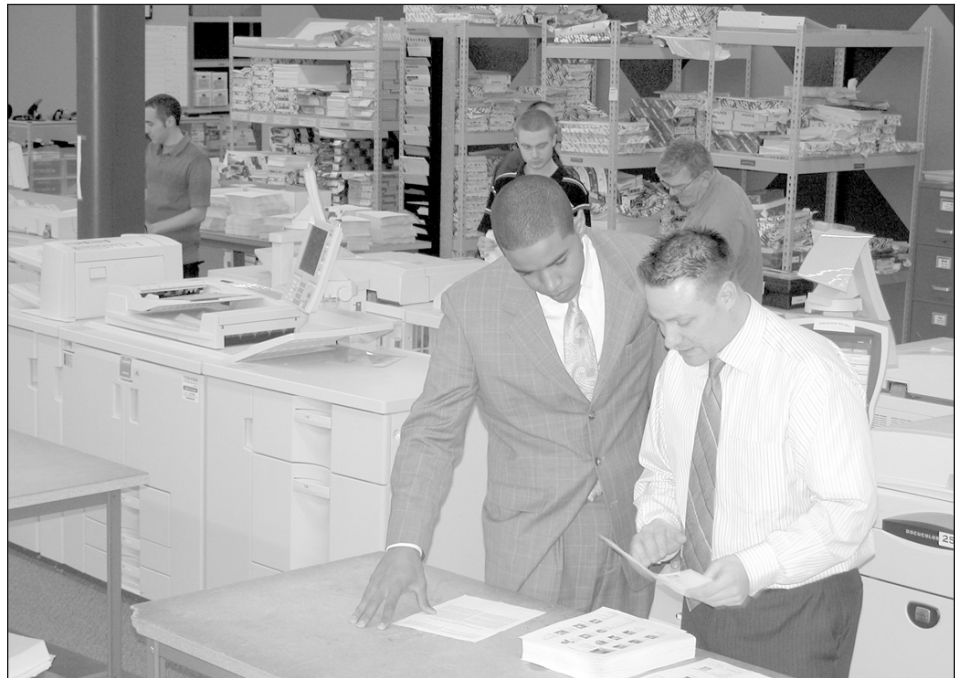
Jon Willette has been running Avalon's appellate division since the company's founding in 2000. A new employee, Joshua Rhem, has joined him.

Denney is planning additional hiring for the division, and within the next four months, it should employ five.

Avalon generates about \$5 million in annual revenue and employs 100 people total. Those numbers include a fledgling medical-record scanning division that the company is still in the process of launching, Denney says.

The appellate work brings in anywhere from \$15,000 per month to more than \$35,000 per month, he says. When it first began, it generated no more than a few thousand dollars monthly.

The work involves preparing and producing the briefs and records attorneys file when practicing before the state's appellate courts, Denney explains.



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Avalon Copy Centers chief operating officer Jon Willette, front right, and Joshua Rhem of the appellate publishing division, oversee production at the company's North State Street facility. Avalon is expanding its appellate-publishing division in response to strong demand for the unit's work.

"It's just grown steadily to a point where now we're forced to bring on more people," he says. "One person is just completely overwhelmed. It didn't just go 'boom.' It's been something that's been building steadily."

Until recently, the company never actively marketed the appellate service, Denney says. That new sales effort should contribute further to the unit's growth, he adds.

Avalon has offices in Rochester, Utica, and Syracuse, where it has its 13,000-square-foot headquarters. It does appellate work originating from all three locations.

Avalon provides copying and document-production services for businesses throughout Central New York. The company originally served primarily law firms, but has since gained clients in dozens of industries.

The common thread is that they all need

high-quality copies, fast turnaround, and specialty services like binding and high-quality color, Denney explains. Confidentiality is another focus for Avalon as many of its clients' jobs contain sensitive information.

Prior to founding Avalon, Denney started his first copy business, Camelot Legal Copy, in 1996 in the Albany area. A few years later, he decided to move to the Syracuse area and sold his interest in Camelot to his partners.

Denney started Avalon with three employees. He says he targeted the upstate markets because he saw a need for high-quality copy services here.

Denney owns the company along with other investors. □

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