

## CASE STUDY:

# Verdant Graphics – A New Printing Business

### Company

Verdant Graphics, Grand Rapids, Michigan

### Profile

Founded in March 2010 to serve the needs of a sister company with future plans to serve the printing needs of the local community, Verdant Graphics has 9 employees.

### Challenge

Don Kallil, a true entrepreneurial businessman, operates several businesses, including Design Design, a B2B manufacturer and distributor of gift and stationery items founded in 1987. Kallil had been outsourcing the printing of his designs and decided to start a separate printing company whose first customer would be Design Design.

### Solution

- Presstek 52DI® digital offset press, Presstek DPM Pro 400, Presstek Latitude

### Results

- Producing the majority of Design Design's offset printing work in a very busy one-shift operation, soon to move to two shifts
- Improved overall quality of printed products and shortened turnaround times
- Reduced the amount of inventory required due to ability to quickly print short runs on demand
- Implemented a simplified, streamlined workflow with Presstek Latitude
- Planning to offer commercial printing services to the local community and the trade

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## Verdant Graphics: An Entrepreneur at Work

**D**on Kallil was a stockbroker at Merrill Lynch in Chicago, but found that his childhood dream of being an entrepreneur was stronger than his passion for stocks and bonds. His first company, Design Design, Inc., was founded in 1987 after a year of intensive research. Most recently, Kallil has started up an independent printing company, Verdant Graphics, whose first customer is Design Design. Verdant Graphics now has 9 employees.



(L to R) Pete Bower, Dan Bracken, Don Kallil, Nate Phelps

Design Design designs, produces, manufactures and distributes items such as greeting cards, invitations, laser paper, note pads and other stationery and gift items, wholesaling these items to more than 12,000 retail doors ranging from Bed Bath & Beyond

and Macy's to independent stationers and gift shops.

"We went to Print 09," says Kallil, "looking for the right set of solutions for our new printing business. After three intensive days at the show, we had gathered a great deal of information. One of the biggest challenges for us was the fact that, even though we have been outsourcing Design Design's printing requirements, none of us had a printing background. There was a lot to learn."

Kallil sees the lack of a printing background as an advantage. "We come to the table with no baggage and no preconceived notions," he explains. "That allowed us to keep a very open mind with respect to building a configuration and

workflow for our business today that will also serve our future expansion needs."

Kallil decided to acquire a Presstek

52DI digital offset press as the centerpiece for his new operation. In addition, he purchased two 2-color Ryobi 3302 conventional offset presses and a 2-color Heidelberg Quickmaster, supported by a Presstek DPM Pro 400 Pro for platemaking.

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In addition to high quality four-color printing, Verdant Graphics offers thermography, foil stamping, die cutting, glittering, folding, cutting, collating and stitching.

“Also because we have no background in print,” adds Kallil, “we opted to purchase Presstek Latitude. This workflow solution allows us to automatically prepare our files for the DI press, including sheet imposition. It makes the process very simple and streamlined.”

## Why a Presstek DI?

Kallil explains that there were two key drivers in his decision to purchase a Presstek DI press. “First,” he says, “I wanted to work with a company I felt I could rely upon. The people from Presstek were quality people, really straightforward and honest to work with, and gave me the feeling that they would be there to support us after the sale. Those observations have proven to be true. People buy from people, and that was a key criterion for me.”

“Second, I liked the technology. I personally feel it is the wave of the future in printing. It allows us to do shorter runs, which was very appealing to me. The quality is excellent, and it is environmentally appealing as well. It hardly uses any chemicals, very little water, washups are fast and clean, and there is very little paper waste. We probably have even less paper waste than many other shops because we order paper custom-sized for our products.”

Kallil was also attracted by the impact the DI press would have on inventory levels, since printing shorter runs becomes cost efficient with this press. “That saves us time, money and waste as well,” he adds.

## Ease of Use

Another important factor was the extreme automation of the DI press and its ease of use. Kallil moved an employee from the inventory department to the position of DI press operator. “He has good computer skills, although no previous color management or printing experience,” Kallil explains. “He was able to quickly understand process color, and he even read the DI manual from cover to cover in addition to going through training. Because he knows the press so well, he is able to quickly pick up tips and tricks when he speaks with Presstek employees, making him even more efficient as a press operator. He is thrilled to be running this press and does a terrific job.”

## Improved Quality

Kallil reports that because of the DI press, the company’s print quality has improved dramatically over the quality that was being received from outsourced conventional print. “We can do

any of the print work we were previously outsourcing ourselves, and do it better,” he says. “Our only limitation is size, and we are working

around that. When it comes time to buy a second press, we are delighted to know that Presstek has a 75DI available that can address any remaining size issues. If I were going to a larger size press, I would absolutely look at Presstek first.”

## Short Runs, Long Runs

Even though the ideal quantity for the DI press is runs of 500 to 20,000, Kallil doesn’t let that hold him back. “You can do short runs and you can do long runs,” he says. “You might have to image new plates after 20,000 or 25,000 sheets, but that is not an issue. Although those longer runs are few and far between, we do have them. We just did a 40,000 sheet run on the DI, and we have a 25,000 run coming up.”

## What’s Next?

Kallil plans to add a second shift, and to begin offering commercial printing services in his community as well as specialty printing to the trade. We believe we can find a good customer base because of the quality we offer with the DI press, the speed of turnaround and the ability to deliver cost-effective short runs. Our unique finishing capabilities will also be a plus as we move to expand our customer base.” ■

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or call 1-800-524-0003 x3599.

