

## CASE STUDY: Blue Cross Blue Shield - The Presstek 75DI is a Game-Changer



(L to R) Dan Jacobson, David Gaines, Laura McEvoy, and Robert Pettway

### Company

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee

### Profile

An in-plant print provider

### Challenge

To transform their operation into a modern print facility in effort to bring outsourced work back in house and add value to the corporation.

### Solution

- Presstek 75DI digital offset press with aqueous coater
- Upgraded portfolio of digital toner presses and expanded bindery capabilities

### Results

- Recaptured outsourced work saving the company millions of dollars
- Earned the prestigious gold LEED certification for their environmentally responsible practices
- Faster turnaround times with less waste
- The Presstek 75DI's large sheet size opened new opportunities for growth

### A Better In-Plant

**B**lue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee (BCBST) is an independent, not-for-profit, locally governed health plan company that has centered on the health and well-being of Tennesseans. Today, three million people in Tennessee and across the country turn to BCBST for health plan coverage and insurance products, however, many more people nationwide benefit from the services provided by its 5,000 employees. In addition to typical coverage, on a national basis BCBST also offers health & wellness programs through Onlife Health, Inc., and health information technology services via Innovation Award winner Shared Health, Inc.

### Transforming their operation

In-plant printing operations can be vulnerable to being closed or outsourced, especially when economic conditions force budget cuts. In-plants who are proactive and successful in demonstrating their value to the organization have a much greater chance of not only surviving, but thriving, as part of the organizational ecosystem. About five years ago, Robert Pettway, Manager, EDM, General Services and Mail Operations, began an effort to transform his operation from a copy center mentality to a modern print, mail and fulfillment operation.

A key objective of the transformation was to bring outsourced print work back in house for better control and quality as well as reduced cost and lead time.

In its digital operation, which primarily prints transactional mail such as provider checks, Explanations of Benefits (EOBs) and other transactional documents, BCBST negotiated with its vendor of toner-based printing equipment to upgrade their equipment at lease end. Turning his attention to the offset printing operation, Pettway was able to add a Presstek 75DI digital offset press with inline aqueous coater to replace a two-color Ryobi press and an older Heidelberg QMDI.

A robust bindery operation, including a new Horizon Stitchliner 5500 booklet maker that can integrate both digital and offset materials, two MBO folders, and a programmable Polar 110 cutter, completed the transformation of the organization's production platform.

The Presstek 75DI digital offset press offers high quality (300 lpi or stochastic screening); extreme automation (job-to-job turnover, including plate imaging, in six minutes); and a small environmental footprint with waterless printing technology, chemistry-free imaging, fast run-up for minimal waste, and consistent quality from job-to-job and within each job. The press is available in 4- to 10-color configurations and with an optional in-line aqueous coater.

## Case Study:

Blue Cross Blue Shield — The Presstek 75DI is a Game Changer  
*Continued*

### The 75DI is a Game Changer

The Presstek 75DI digital offset press, 4-color with aqueous coater, joined the Print Solutions family in May of 2011. Pettway says, "The 75DI is a game-changer for us because of its sheet size, capabilities and sheer speed. We feel confident this press will play a key role in helping us bring in work currently being outsourced. In fact, our customers were so excited about this new press that while the press was being assembled on the floor and before the first production job even came off of the press, we had more than a million impressions lined up for it!"

To gain permission to acquire the 75DI, Pettway and his team built a very thorough business case, including an ROI analysis created in conjunction with Finance and the center's customers, taking into consideration volumes and expectations. "Once we developed that information to the point we were confident in it," he reports, "we presented the business case to our executives, answered their questions, and satisfied their very thorough analysis. Our executive level management was convinced this acquisition was the right thing to do for the business, and we gained approval to buy the 75DI outright. This equipment will have a 10-year-plus life span and provide full payback within its first few years of production."

In terms of recapturing outsourced volume, Pettway says, "We hold ourselves to the same standards we would hold any outside printer to, and we report to executive management on those savings. We are saving millions for the corporation across our platform. In addition, we make it as easy as possible for our customers to send us work. Our only motive is to benefit the corporation and to provide customers with the highest quality at the lowest possible cost."

The 75DI is reducing the amount of outsourced work. Pettway explains that some of the million impressions the center had already lined up for the press was work that they couldn't do competitively before. In some cases, this is because some designers prefer the look and feel of offset over digital. In other cases, quantities were too high to cost-effectively produce on toner-based equipment. And the expanded sheet size of the 75DI also opened many new doors.

"We are also very pleased with the fast turnaround times we are able to offer," Pettway adds. "With the DI's 6-up sheet size, we get the equivalent of 96,000 letter-sized impressions per hour, and we have really enjoyed the 6-minute makeready.



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We are print production ready within 10 to 20 sheets as compared to 200 to 300 sheets for conventional offset. That saves not only time, but it also reduces waste. The 75DI's chemistry-free on-press platemaking and waterless printing technology are also a huge environmental plus."

And environmental sustainability is a hot issue at BCBST.

Pettway says, "Corporately, we are very committed to sustainability. The corporate campus recently earned gold LEED certification, the first business campus in Tennessee and the second largest in the country to have achieved this prestigious certification.

Throughout our operation we try to minimize waste and utilize environmentally responsible

materials as much as possible including FSC2 certified paper and Soy ink for the 75DI." Pettway is also excited to report that the Gateway Building that houses Print Solutions will soon feature a rooftop solar photovoltaic farm that will produce the average equivalent of 45% of the current Gateway Building power consumption and provide a 3-year ROI with ongoing cumulative income.

"In 2005," Pettway concludes, "we were looking at ourselves as just a copy shop. If a customer asked for something we didn't normally handle, we just said no. Moving from that mind set to today's Print Solutions mindset has been a huge paradigm change for the operation and the culture. We now work as advocates for our customers; if they need something that makes sense to provide in house, we aggressively pursue it. At the end of the day we do not just want satisfied customers, we want fans." And the 75DI has been a huge contributor toward developing those fans for Print Solutions. ■



#### For more information about Presstek Products:

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