

## CASE STUDY:

# Brown University – 34DI® the Cornerstone to Revitalization

## Company

Brown University

## Profile

Located in Providence, Rhode Island, Brown University is the seventh-oldest college in the United States. Brown is an independent, co-educational Ivy League institution with more than 8,000 students across all of its programs and 682 faculty.

## Challenge

As part of a campus reorganization, Brown University sought a new Director for its Graphic Services Department to transform the department to better meet the needs of the University. Objectives included providing high quality fast turnaround short run 4-color printing and improved bindery services.

## Solution

- Presstek 34DI® digital offset press

## Results

- Implementation of a true 4-color offset press to affordably handle a wide range of short run work, freeing up the digital toner-based press for shorter runs and variable data.
- Increased confidence on the part of University faculty and staff in the ability of the Graphic Services Department to meet their needs, resulting in less outsourced work and overall cost savings.
- Ability to print high end work using metallic inks and varnish.
- Rapid growth to optimum utilization of new Presstek 34DI digital offset press as users responded to its unique capabilities.



Leslie Rutledge goes over a proof with Jim Smith (left), and James Watkins.

In 2010, Brown University undertook a campus reorganization which had to be completed by June 30th of that year. They were looking at redundancy and what administrative services could be combined to achieve greater efficiencies. At the same time, the University was seeking a new Director of Graphic Services to modernize its Graphic Services Department, which included both a copy center and an off-campus print shop. As part of the reorganization, the decision was made to consolidate eight graphic designers from different departments and to add an Art Director reporting to the Director of Graphic Services. Leslie Rutledge, who had executed a similar revitalization at San Diego State University, was brought

in as Director of Graphic Services to transform the department to better meet the needs of the University.

## Delivering Added Value

Brown wanted to reposition the Graphic Services Department in order to offer more value to the University. This included updating infrastructure and processes as well as ensuring that the department was properly staffed to meet changing customer needs.

Rutledge's initial step upon taking on the role of Director of Graphic Services was to speak with customers about what they liked—and didn't like—about the Department's services. As a result of her findings, she reorganized the staff, including hiring a new plant manager.

The Department had an aged 2-color Sakurai and two Hamada presses, as well as an HP Indigo digital press that was being used for static short run printing. Customers were increasingly seeking short to medium runs of 4-color work that could not be cost effectively produced on the Indigo or the shop's conventional offset presses. To meet that need, Brown acquired a Presstek 34DI digital offset press, replacing the three aged conventional offset presses. This allowed them to increase quality, improve turnaround time and opened the door to bringing more work into the shop. The bindery was updated with a Duplo 645 Slitter and a Duplo System 5000 booklet-maker, as well as an overhaul of the existing folder and cutter.

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### Meeting the Expectations of “Brown First”

At Brown University, there is a Brown First policy that, in the case of the Graphic Services Department, requires staff and faculty to work through the Graphic Services Department for all printing needs. Rutledge says, “Although our Brown First business model centralizes all university printing through Graphic Services, if we cannot meet customer requirements, then the work goes off campus for services.” In speaking with customers, Rutledge learned that in some cases, there was a lack of confidence that the print shop could deliver to the quality and schedule required, resulting in some work going off campus.

“We needed to change both our mindset and our capabilities,” Rutledge added. “As one example, even though we had the Indigo, it was being used as a 4-color press. There was no true variable work being done. Pricing was even established like an offset press, with setup and makeready charges. Acquiring the Presstek 34DI made a great deal of sense, giving us a true 4-color offset press to affordably handle a wide range of short run work, and freeing up the Indigo for short runs and variable data.” Although the shop had not been producing variable data work, Rutledge knew there was a good opportunity to add it to the mix.

In addition to hiring Sara Ladds, one of the graphic designers from campus, for the position of Art Director, Rutledge also sought a plant manager from outside the University. “I acted as plant manager for three months,” she explains, “both to get a good handle on the operation, and also to give me time to find the right resource. We were very lucky to secure Jim Smith for the position. He understands the equipment we have in place, and coming from a commercial print background, he has a terrific perspective on customer service that is so welcome in a university environment.” She also hired two press operators, one who was already experienced with the DI press, and another who knew the Indigo press but was also cross-trained on the DI. Currently the shop has three press operators.

Another important factor for Rutledge in ensuring that the operation ran smoothly was as much cross-training as possible

for the staff. “I wanted all of our press operators to be able to run any of our presses as well as the Duplos, and we have been making great strides toward achieve that. The prepress staff can operate the Duplo 645, and they are responsible for producing the layouts for this machine. With a staff of only eight in the print shop, we need to make the best use of everyone’s time, and these cross-training efforts have paid big benefits.”

Rutledge also works with Presstek to purchase pressroom and DI supplies using its online e-commerce site,

shop.presstek.com, to consolidate some of the purchasing and to gain benefit from volume purchases. “We have a great inside sales rep,”

Rutledge says, “and we have had good success with the Toyo inks. We can also print metallics and varnish on the Presstek 34DI, and it looks gorgeous. Envelopes are another thing we do a huge amount of on the DI. We are really running that press to the max.”

### Up Next

In the first year, Rutledge focused on establishing direction and positioning for the organization, and executing against those strategies. She says, “Today, the shop is profitable, but what I am primarily measuring is quality and on-time delivery. We have made significant strides in those areas, and those are two things we really need to stay on top of to retain our customer base.”

When asked about the future of printing, Rutledge had this to say: “I see shorter press runs and a more variable, but more importantly, printing responsibly. I tell my customers to print what they need when they need it. This gives them the flexibility

to update and change materials easily. With our new Presstek 34DI and updated bindery, we can easily meet this requirement.”

Rutledge and her team are excited about the future of Graphic Services at Brown University. “We have overcome a number of challenges in our work to improve our services and offerings,” Rutledge concludes. “The process has offered an opportunity to develop a remarkably strong team dedicated to customer service and brimming with new ideas for our shop and our customers. We are looking ahead to an exciting future!”

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#### For more information about Presstek Products:

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