

CASE STUDY:

Herron Printing & Graphics—Sustainability Is Key

Company

Herron Printing & Graphics,
Gaithersburg, Maryland

Profile

A one-stop shop for “green” commercial printing

Challenge

Herron Printing wanted to replace their four-color press to improve print quality and productivity. They were also looking for a solution that would reduce the company’s carbon footprint.

Solution

A Presstek 34DI® digital offset press

Results

- Faster turnaround times
- Reduced waste
- Able to produce 34 percent more work in the same timeframe
- Lowered prices 27 percent, while still growing revenues due to increased efficiency
- Blending DI digital offset and toner-based printing to leverage the strengths of both platforms

A Presstek DI® Press Brings Both Business Growth and a Reduced Carbon Footprint

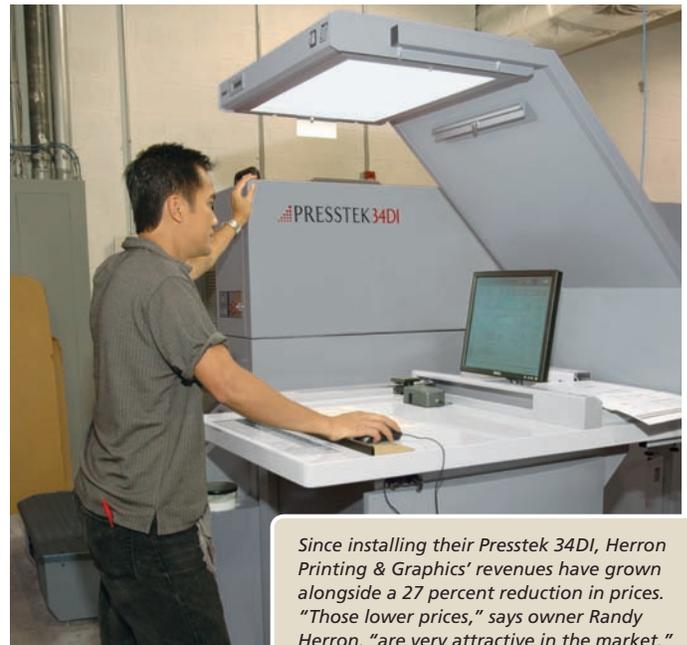
Randy Herron, owner of Herron Printing & Graphics, is dedicated to making his operation as environmentally-friendly as possible. His business is a certified member of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Green Power Partnership. His company car is a hybrid Toyota Prius. The company recycles all paper waste and cardboard, and uses vegetable-based (linseed oil) inks. Rather than replacing an existing four-color press with another conventional press, Herron invested in an environmentally sustainable Presstek 34DI digital offset press.

“We chose to purchase a Presstek DI press because of its environmental benefits and its high level of efficiency.”

“We needed to produce higher quality,” Herron says, “in order to stay competitive. Although we already had installed chemistry-free platemaking for our existing press, we chose to purchase a Presstek DI press rather than a five-color press, because of its environmental benefits and its high level of efficiency.”

This investment has paid off for Herron. While the original intent was to leverage the DI’s environmental friendliness to reduce the company’s carbon footprint, Herron Printing & Graphics has also benefited from increased efficiency. “The DI press gave us capacity for 34 percent more work in the same

Continued on reverse



Since installing their Presstek 34DI, Herron Printing & Graphics’ revenues have grown alongside a 27 percent reduction in prices. “Those lower prices,” says owner Randy Herron, “are very attractive in the market.”

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timeframe,” says Herron. “That was huge. We went from printing all the time every day to having a couple of days free when we first installed the press. Now we are back to five days again.”

DI Drives Growth

Herron reports that this increased efficiency has helped bring in more work, growing revenues 20 percent between 2006 and 2007. “We closed out 2008 with 25 percent revenue growth,” he says. “At least 50 percent of that growth is directly attributable to the Presstek 34DI press.”

Herron has seen this revenue growth even though he reduced prices across the board by 27 percent. “As you can imagine,” he comments, “those lower prices are very attractive in the market. They were attractive to us as well, since we were able to maintain our margins despite that drastic reduction. No chemicals, reduced water consumption, less waste and more throughput—this is a formula for success in this crazy business of ours.”

Alternative Energy

Not only has Herron turned to the efficient Presstek DI press and the Toyota Prius to reduce his environmental footprint, but the company proudly powers its operation with 100 percent wind energy. “This is one of the most exciting steps we have taken,” added Herron. “Although the energy cost is about 23 percent higher than energy produced with carbon-based fuels, it is a step toward reducing dependence on petroleum and it is worth it. I am very proud of the progress we have been able to make at Herron Printing & Graphics toward this end.”

More Flexibility

Herron also states that the Presstek DI press allows him to print on heavier stocks, moving up to a maximum of 21 point from the previous high of 14 point stock his older press could handle. Herron has also recently added a Canon 7000 toner-

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based device to position the company to move into the variable data market.

“We hired a color expert to calibrate our shop,” he says. “This allows us to easily move between the Canon and the Presstek DI depending on job requirements, and even to mix the two technologies within a single job, while maintaining the highest possible color quality and consistency.”

The cutoff point for moving work from the Canon to the DI is about 700 impressions, unless of course, it is a thicker stock that will only run on the DI, according to Herron. “Perhaps more importantly,” he adds, “we can be much more responsive to customer needs. Perhaps we have printed a run of 5,000 on the DI, but now the customer needs 100 more. No problem! Since the Canon is calibrated to the DI, we simply fire it up and produce the extra 100. This has delighted our customers.”

Future Plans

With a hybrid manufacturing process in place, Herron is now gearing up to produce variable data work using Printable’s Fusion Pro as the front end. “The way the industry is going,” he says, “this is critical if we want to stay relevant and continue to grow. We must become more of a communications company than a printing company. Instead of selling postcards, we can sell a package that might start with 5,000 postcards produced on the DI press, followed by an e-mail blast and personalized URLs on follow-up postcards. The ROI for your customers is significantly

improved with this type of multichannel campaign, and our hybrid manufacturing platform is perfect for this profitable application.” Herron plans to leverage cost efficiencies even more

by printing static information with the DI and overprinting variable data with the Canon when it makes sense to do so.

“We really do love this press. It is so easy to use. We get so much work done. And, it is clearly green. All the way around, I have only good things to say about our Presstek 34DI.”

We Love the Presstek DI

“My production manager has been in the printing business for nearly a quarter of a century,” Herron points out. “The other day, we were handling three rush jobs, and he said, ‘I love this press.’ This is not something he would normally say. We really do love this press. It is so easy to use. We get so much work done. And, it is clearly green. All the way around, I have only good things to say about our Presstek 34DI.” ■

For information about Presstek digital solutions, or for a schedule of demonstrations, visit

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