

CASE STUDY:

Hudson Printing – Delivering Award-Winning Quality and Efficiency

Company

Hudson Printing, Macedonia, Ohio

Profile

A 35 employee commercial print shop with approximately \$4 million in annual revenue. They also have a large promotions department and offer graphic design services. Three small-format ABDick presses, a 29" 4-color Komori and three 40" 4-color Harris presses comprise its conventional offset production platform. In addition, the company has both monochrome and color Konica Minolta digital presses.

Challenge

Early in 2009 Hudson made the move to CTP from a conventional film-based platemaking process. At the beginning of 2010 they started looking for a way to more efficiently produce print runs in the 5,000 to 25,000 sheet range.

Solution

Presstek's 52DI® digital offset press, Dimension Pro 800 and Aeon Thermal CTP plates

Results

- With greater efficiency in production processes the company grew 20% and added 9 employees.
- Customer press checks are now done in less than an hour making customers very happy.
- Higher quality printing won them the Ben Franklin Gold, Silver and Bronze Ink Award.
- The added capabilities of being able to print on 24 pt stock along with very thin vellum opened up new applications and opportunities for growth.

Moving to a New Production Platform with Presstek CTP and Digital Offset Printing

In making a move to CTP, Hudson Printing turned to Presstek, acquiring a Dimension Pro 800 platesetter using Presstek Aeon plates. According to Al Carrero, President of Operations and Finance, "As you can imagine our film-based platemaking process was very inefficient and time consuming. It was past time to move into CTP. We were looking for an easy-to-use platesetter, and plates that were cost effective for the many mid-range runs we produce, but that could also accommodate longer runs when necessary. In addition, we needed plates that would run well on our older presses, which are a lot less forgiving than today's newer presses. The Dimension Pro 800 with Aeon plates looked like the best match for our needs."

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Carrero also realized that today's printing business is a makeready business, saying, "You don't make money off of printing these days; you make it off of makeready. We needed to add a fast-makeready solution that could address the fast-growing category of 5,000 to 25,000 count that was not profitable to produce using either our digital or conventional offset presses. We chose the Presstek 52DI and have been extremely pleased with the results.



Left to Right;

Mark Castagnola – Pressman

Clay Warner – Press and Bindery Lead

Al Carrero – President Operations and Finance

Grant Looper – Production Lead

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Continued

Structured for Business Growth

With its updated production platform in place, Hudson was well positioned to take advantage of growth opportunities as the recession began to ease. Not only is the firm more efficient and profitable, but its customers are delighted at the fast turnaround Hudson is now able to deliver. “Where in the past, it was a somewhat long and drawn-out affair to get a job ready for press, including film-based processes, manual proofs, half-day press checks and more,” comments Carrero, “today our customers are able to look at the job on screen, and once approved there, we can send the file to the Presstek 52DI press and have output for them to review within 15 minutes. In a process that literally could have taken days in the past, now they can be in and out in 30 to 45 minutes with job production underway. That has really made our customers happy. No one has time to sit around for half a day doing press checks anymore! If we can free them up and make their jobs easier, it benefits all of us.”

The Presstek DI Difference

In addition to a more efficient digital platemaking process, Hudson has also accrued substantial benefits from its Presstek 52DI digital offset press, including reduced time and cost of makeready, improved quality and ease of operation with the 52DI's extreme automation. “The quality has been unbelievable,” says Carrero. “In fact, the DI brought us a Ben Franklin Gold Ink Award and a Bronze Ink Award, and we were also able to secure a Silver Award with output from our older Harris presses due to the quality the Aeon plates enable us to deliver. We have also entered into an international competition, which we have high hopes of winning.” Carrero points out that the 52DI filled a hole in the company's production process, saying, “It was one more tool in our toolbox, assuring that we could meet demand for small to mid-sized runs that were not economically feasible with our existing toner-based and conventional offset presses. We had the firepower to do the very short runs with our digital presses, and to do large runs with our conventional presses.

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But you cannot afford a 1.5- to 2-hour makeready for those mid-range runs. It threw our costs all out of whack. Now we can address it all, from ultra-short-run work all the way up through runs of a couple hundred thousand. Thanks to Presstek, we have been able to pull together an extremely versatile platform.”

Wider Range of Stocks: New Opportunities

Carrero also states that the DI's ability to run on heavier stocks, up to 24 point, has been a boon for the company and its customers. “We had not been able to produce these applications in the past,” he says. “Now we see quite a bit of demand for heavy posters and special mailers that use these thicker stocks.” Carrero cites a confectioner that wanted to produce giveaways for its stores using 24-point, and also explains he has found more opportunities to produce shelf-talkers and other point of sale materials. “The DI press also does well with thinner stocks,” he says. “One piece I am especially proud of is a book that used a vellum flyleaf with a waterfall printed in blue. You could see the page behind it through the vellum. To be able to run something of that quality and look was phenomenal. Even the designer that designed the piece couldn't believe the quality we were achieving. It was almost a 3D effect.”

Presstek Delivers a Growth Engine

Carrero attributes a significant percentage of its 2010 growth directly to the DI press, saying, “It was directly responsible for at least 30% of our growth. In addition, just having something this amazing to talk about with customers and prospects opened more doors for us, whether or not they ultimately had a need for DI runs.” The Hudson team has also been pleased at the ease of working with Presstek. “The Presstek team has been professional in every instance I can think of,” he concludes. “There are not a lot of companies that demonstrate the level of support we get from Presstek and their sincere concern for helping us achieve great business results. My hat is off to them. They are clearly a partner we look forward to working with over the long term.” ■



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about Presstek Products:**

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