

Getting Into the Game

University of Colorado Boulder, Col.

Tapped to oversee an in-plant located in a college football stadium (really), Tom Tozier needed a new game plan.

"When I came here [in January 2008], not only was the shop not CTP, we were farming out to a film setter. We actually bought our film from a print shop in town," admits Tozier, director of Imaging Services at the University of Colorado at Boulder. "Turnaround just for film was normally two days, and as long as three days, which could stretch our total turn time to seven to 10 days."

The in-plant does not have right of first refusal on campus and, not surprisingly, some potential clients felt that the shop wasn't worth the wait, according to Tozier. "That was a real black eye for us," he acknowledges. In addition, outsourcing film production was expensive.

Thus, a transition to CTP seemed more *de rigueur* than risky.

"We had nowhere to go but up," Tozier assesses.

He was able to sell the university on the technology by promoting both kinds of green benefits. "For a \$50,000 investment, I was looking at an annual savings of \$20,000,"

Tozier calculates. And, by choosing a chemistry-free solution, the shop wouldn't be creating additional on-campus waste.

The in-plant installed a Presstek Vector TX52 thermal system in April.

"We knew the companies out there and we liked Presstek," says Tozier. "We did our RFP, and they won."

The system is used in conjunction with Presstek's Freedom plates. "Our primary criterion was that we didn't want to use mylar plates," Tozier notes. "Our press manager just preferred aluminum. Plus, we can recycle aluminum."

Overall, Tozier rates the CTP experience as a nine out of 10. "This system is especially good for us in terms of quality," he declares, describing the shop's niche as 20,000 impressions and under. Annual revenues are about \$2.5 million, 60 percent from offset work. The in-plant operates two-color Ryobi presses (14x20" maximum) and a 12x18" Multi.

"In addition, our plate costs dropped from \$40 to \$10 a plate on our larger press," he adds. "And the plates are 100-percent daylight friendly."

The biggest con, Tozier opines, is the need for a proprietary plate and resultant locked-in prices. He also advises peers to make sure that vendors follow through with promised pricing.

"Also, we did have a week-long period of chasing our tails to get the press chemistry right," he adds. "Our vendor recommended a change of fountain solution, but that didn't work for us and we ended up going back to exactly what we had been using."

The platemaker was installed easily into a space formerly occupied by an old vacuum frame.

"We were able to repurpose our stripper into a full-time pressman, and the prepress technicians are now in charge of making plates," Tozier reports. "If a plate gets scratched, it's easy for anyone to get a new one from the queue. We don't have to wait for an expert, which is important in a two-shift operation." And most importantly, turnaround time has decreased dramatically. Remember that two-day turnaround on film?

"Now," Tozier enthuses, "we're going to press in two hours."



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TOM TOZIER

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