

CASE STUDY: Infinity Press – Streamlining Operations

Company

Infinity Press, San Carlos, California

Profile

Infinity Press is a small commercial printer with eight employees, operating a 40-inch two-color press and a 20-inch 5-color press. The company has developed a specialty market by printing on plastic substrates.

Challenge

In order to improve productivity and stay competitive, Infinity Press was looking to replace its film-based platemaking process with a chemistry-free CTP solution.

Solution

Presstek Dimension chemistry-free CTP system with Anthem Pro chemistry-free thermal plates

Results

- Improved productivity
- Reduced prepress staff from three to one while increasing throughput
- Eliminated the expenses of film, chemistry and disposal
- Operates an environmentally responsible prepress department
- Experiencing faster run-up and reduced makeready waste at the press

Gaining Multiple Advantages With Presstek Chemistry-free CTP

Infinity Press, a general commercial printer founded in 1992, has eight employees and operates both 20-inch and 40-inch presses. Owner Chris Edwards takes pride in the company's ability to deliver a wide range of high-quality products, including a number of items printed on plastics. He says, "We have built an interesting niche by printing unique plastic products, including invitations for special events, business cards, and books with plastic covers. People love the samples I show them. It sparks new ideas about how they, too, can use such unique plastic items."

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Infinity had been using a film-based system to produce plates for its two presses. He says, "I knew I had to switch to CTP in order to survive in the increasingly competitive Northern California print market. With a film-based process, not only did it take longer to produce plates, but it consumed a lot of manpower in prepress, as well as at the press because of the constant adjustments required to get everything in register. Ideally, I wanted to move to a chemistry-free platemaking process to improve productivity, reduce costs, and run a more environmentally friendly operation."

The Right Solution

To meet all of his goals with one solution, Edwards installed a Presstek Dimension200 platemaker to image chemistry-free Anthem plates. He chose the two-page format Dimension because he anticipated selling his 40-inch press.

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Dimension platemakers are available in 2-page, 4-page and 8-page models.

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With the new system in place, Edwards realized a number of advantages. He points out that he was able to reduce the size of his prepress department from three to one because making plates is much easier. “Our prepress worker is unbelievably productive now,” Edwards says. “He prep’s files, generates internal proofs, and makes digital proofs for clients. While all that is happening, he is also sending plates to the Dimension. I can’t believe how much work we are running through the prepress department now with only one operator. He keeps up with two presses without any difficulty at all.”

Presstek chemistry-free CTP has also increased productivity in the pressroom. “Registration is much better than with our previous film-based process,” Edwards notes. “It always took a

lot of time to get the press in register; now, registration is near perfect as soon as the plates are mounted on the press.” When Presstek introduced its new

enhanced chemistry-free Anthem Pro grained plates, Edwards immediately saw the advantages. According to Edwards, “My pressmen prefer a grained plate. It gives them a high degree of control over the water balance on the press, and results in a fast run-up and even less makeready waste. Our pressmen don’t want to run anything else. With Anthem Pro plates, we are as happy as we have ever been. It is the best plate Presstek has ever made, and it meets our needs perfectly.”

Edwards was pleased with his decision to acquire the Dimension, so when he decided to keep his 40-inch press, he upgraded to the 8-page format Dimension800. “I decided to stay with my friends at Presstek,” he says.

Reducing the Waste Stream

Edwards is delighted to be running a chemistry-free operation. “We have a simplified waste stream here. The only chemistry I have in the prepress area is ink for the proofer,” he explains. This is a huge change from our previous system, which involved a significant amount of chemistry and all of the costs and hassles associated with storing and disposing of it.”

Additionally, Edwards’ team finds it much easier and much less costly to make late-stage changes. He comments, “How do you tell a customer who wants to make a change that they have to pay for film all over again? In the digital world, you just make a new PDF proof and off you go. That alone is reason enough to change. And when we do need to generate a new plate, it takes minutes rather than hours.”

Looking back, Edwards states, “I was committed to running a chemistry-free operation and it has made a big difference for my company. Had I not moved to Presstek’s Dimension800 CTP with chemistry-free Anthem Pro thermal plates, I don’t believe I would still be in business today.” ■

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