

CASE STUDY:

Tri-Lakes Printing – Bringing Business to Life

Company

Tri-Lakes Printing, Monument, Colorado

Profile

Founded 23 years ago, Tri-Lakes Printing has undergone a technological facelift since new ownership took over in 2003.

Challenge

Seeking a way to produce higher quality four-color work faster.

Solution

A Presstek 34DI digital offset press

Results

- Produced 13 million impressions on the 34DI press in the first year.
- Accelerated growth of the business, which was already over 300 percent in four years
- More than doubled the dollar volume of four-color work in one year as a direct result of purchasing the 34DI press
- Reduced standard turnaround time to three days or less, and offers same-day rush service for a premium
- Reduced average makeready from 200-300 sheets to 10 sheets
- Producing an average of 15 jobs per day on the 34DI press
- Securing business in other U.S. locations and Australia due to DI quality, cost-effectiveness and fast turnaround
- Expanding production space from less than 1,000 square feet to 6,000 square feet and considering purchase of a Presstek 52DI press to accommodate growing business

Doubling Four-Color Revenue with a Presstek 34DI Digital Offset Press

Bill Brown and his wife, Kathy, moved to Colorado from Southern California in 2003 and were looking for a business to invest in. “We stumbled across Tri-Lakes Printing,” says Brown. “It wasn’t for sale, but we convinced the owner to sell it to us.” The business had been in existence since 1984, and was operating with a black-and-white ABDick 360 duplicator using electrostatic plates. Little investment had been made in technology.

“The first thing we did,” says Brown, “is bring in a new ABDick 9995

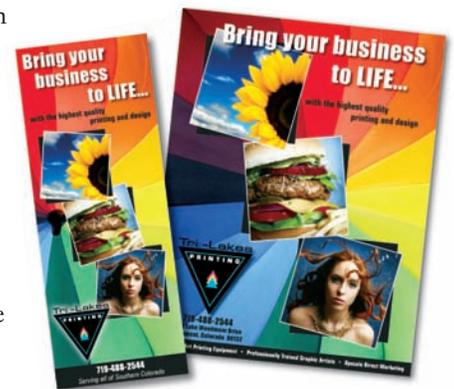
two-color press with a DPM platemaker, and we had a two-year plan to add a four-color press.” The Browns were so successful with their new business that they were able to acquire the four-color press in just six months. But two years later, they realized they needed even more capabilities.

In November of 2006, the Browns purchased a Presstek 34DI digital offset press, and in the ensuing year, have produced over 13 million impressions, revolutionizing their business.

“When we bought the business,” says Brown, “it was only generating \$450,000 in annual revenues. We ran the operation with the two of us and three part-time employees.” Today, Tri-Lakes employs ten full-time people and generates annual revenues of \$1.5 million. “We would not be where we are today without our DI® press,” Brown adds.

Just one year after purchasing the conventional four-color press, the Browns started looking for a more efficient way to produce four-color offset printing. “We wanted to bump up the quality, and we needed to turn work around faster,” Brown says. When they learned about Presstek DI digital offset printing, they were intrigued. “It took us a year to make the decision,” Brown comments. “In hindsight, I wish I had bought the 34DI earlier.”

“We would not be where we are today without our DI press.”



Bring Your Business to Life

“The capability of our DI press is unbelievable,” says Bill Brown of Tri-Lakes Printing. “We have created marketing pieces that really show it off. It is absolutely awesome and it has certainly brought our business to life.”

Case Study:

Tri-State Printing—Bringing Business to Life

Continued

Expanding Horizons

The first benefit Brown reaped with his new 34DI press was the ability to turn work around quickly. “We can literally take in a job, run it in the morning and deliver it to the customer by noon. They pay for that rush service, but we can do it.” With the fast turnaround times the DI offers, the Browns also decided to add mailing services to expand their service and generate additional revenue.

The Browns also appreciate the DI’s chemistry-free operation and its waterless ink. “Sheets are up to color immediately,” says Brown, “with a predictable ten minutes and 30 seconds for makeready. And we are not emitting noxious chemicals into the environment. Another thing people don’t realize,” he adds, “is how much you save on waste. We have the press dialed in so close that within 10 sheets we are sellable. Compare that to 200 to 300 makeready sheets on a conventional four-color press, and it really adds up. Just think of the money you save each year just in reduced waste!”

The high quality and fast turnaround time is attracting new customers all the time. Brown cites the case of a high-end builder who was in a real crunch and needed some four-color work for the next day. “We turned the work around for him,” Brown says, “and he was thrilled. Recently, he brought another job that consists of 120,000 6” x 11” four-color postcards, that we are printing and mailing, and I know it won’t be the last job he brings us. These are the kinds of doors the DI press opens.”

Tri-Lakes Printing has generated a great reputation by word of mouth that has spread far and wide. How far? “A local businessman who sells Australian mussels came into the shop when we first got the DI,” Brown relates. “We produced six different offset shells for him in runs of 1,000 each. He was so amazed with the quality that we are now doing work for the parent company in Australia, printing here and shipping it to them. We also do work for companies in New York and Georgia, as well as in other Southwestern states. There is no possible way I would have acquired this business with my conventional press.” Brown admits that the story sounds amazing, and comments that he even finds it hard to believe.

Tri-Lakes is also producing a significant amount of work for brokers and other printers who are attracted by the quality and turnaround the DI offers. “Every minute on our press is booked every day,” Brown says. “Just imagine what will happen when we have our web site up and running,” he says. “That’s when the doors will really open.”

Breaking New Ground

Already, the Browns need a bigger press. “A Presstek 52DI will give us more capability and speed, and the larger format will



Finding Hidden Treasure

“We decided to take a creative approach,” says Bill Brown about filling his expanded four-color printing capability. “We became a publisher, and are producing a community magazine six times per year, with 11 signatures and 165,000 impressions. The magazine is mailed to 13,900 homes. We sell advertising to generate revenue. We include interesting articles, recipes and fun stuff.” For example, various items are hidden within the magazine, and the first ten people who come into the shop having found the hidden items receive a gift certificate to a local restaurant. “We hid a bat in the October issue for Halloween,” he says. “It has been a big hit, and people look forward to receiving the magazine.”

Brown is using his Presstek 34DI press to produce the magazine, touting its high quality printing in his own ad.

increase our flexibility. We are looking forward to taking that step once we open our new building and get settled in.” The Browns have been so successful that they are building a new 10,000 square foot facility that will increase production space from 1,000 square feet to 6,000 square feet. “It will be a state-of-the-art center,” Brown says.

Brown offers a business card special, ganging 4/0 business cards printed on 14 point stock into two runs a week. “We run them 16-up with bleeds and some are two-sided. At \$79.95 per thousand, we generate nearly \$3,000 a week just on business cards. That will become even more profitable once we have a larger format 52DI.”

Brown concludes, “When people ask me whether they should buy a DI press, my answer is an unqualified ‘yes’. Our business has changed forever, thanks to our DI press.” ■

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