

CASE STUDY:

Minuteman Press of Cambridge—A Cut Above

Company

Minuteman Press of Cambridge, Massachusetts

Profile

Minuteman Press of Cambridge is a full service commercial and digital printer with 32 employees.

Challenge

With a growing volume of color printing being produced on toner-based digital devices, Minuteman Press of Cambridge needed to find a solution for producing that work more cost-effectively, while improving the quality of finished pieces.

Solution

A Presstek 52DI® digital offset press

Results

- Able to meet tight turnaround times and cost-effective production of quantities as low as 300 press sheets
- Leveraging environmental benefits of press in sales communications
- Now able to offer a number of new applications that were not possible prior to acquiring the Presstek 52DI press

A Presstek 52DI® Grows Marketing Communications Business

Peter Reed, Owner and Vice President of Sales for Minuteman Press of Cambridge, Massachusetts, views his business as serving three core elements of printing needs that most organizations have.

- Corporate identity: Letterhead, business cards, pocket folders and the like—these applications are particularly suited for ordering through their Web-to-print interface.
- Documentation: This can be as simple as basic photocopying, or include more elaborate projects such as corporate training materials accompanied by card decks, quick reference guides, and assembled into binders or booklets.
- Marketing communications: This is a broader umbrella that includes trade show and event materials, sales support collateral, direct mail, promotional products and more.



Peter Reed, owner and Vice President of Sales for Minuteman Press of Cambridge with Dean Lyettefi, Operations Manager.

The last category, Reed points out, is often quality and time critical. As that aspect of Minuteman's business continued to grow, the company was asking more from its toner-based devices than they could deliver in terms of quality and cost. "We needed to find an improved method for producing these materials in-house," he explains. "The answer was the Presstek 52DI, which is now playing a key role in our business."

Growing Need for Four-color Offset Printing

The company opened in 1992 as a Minuteman Press franchise. Over the years, Reed and his team have worked to offer services that uniquely position the company to meet emerging market needs.

With one-and two-color offset presses supported by a DPM platesetter, and black-and-white and color toner devices, Minuteman was able to produce most corporate identity and documentation materials cost effectively. "These are important business areas," says Reed, "but there was good growth opportunity in the marketing and communications area that we felt we could better exploit with our own four-color press, as a complement to our digital color presses. We were particularly interested in a press that would allow us to produce static color more cost effectively."

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Reed found it costly to produce these materials on his digital toner-based printers and preferred to leverage the variable data capability of those printers rather than using them for static runs.

A Presstek 52DI digital offset press was the answer for Minuteman, enabling the company to transfer much of its static full-color printing from its toner-based color printers to the DI press. Reed notes, “We have done a thorough cost analysis, and find that the 52DI is cost effective for runs as low as 300 press sheets—that is a phenomenally low number for high quality offset printing.”

An Optimum Position for Revenue Growth

Reed reports that the combination of moving print from toner-based devices to the Presstek 52DI, bringing work in-house that was formerly outsourced, sourcing new applications, and acquiring new customers—all enabled by the 52DI—put the company in an optimum position for revenue growth.

One example of a new application is the production of ‘birth certificates’ for stuffed animals. “Each certificate contains a gold-colored seal,” Reed explains. “We are able to produce this gold seal using four-color process with the DI rather than having to send it out for foil stamping. The fact that the DI press has tighter registration than conventional presses and prints at a 300 line screen results in better Pantone™ matching, including some metallics, and these certificates are one example of where this has benefited us and our customers.”

In another unique application, Minuteman produced a souvenir book for a convention in Boston. “This was a saddle-stitched book with a black-and-white interior,” says Reed. “The full-color cover featured some very dramatic, detailed artwork by the guest of honor at the convention. We immediately recognized that this would be a terrific application to leverage the synergies of our digital and DI presses. It received rave reviews from the hosting organization and the artist. We would not have been able to produce this time- and quality-sensitive job without the DI press.”

Reed plans to reach out to more quality-minded clients. “The DI press opens up a whole different group of projects we can address,” he says. “We are approaching ad agencies, high-end designers and corporate art directors—sharing our new capabilities with them. We are met with very positive responses. These professionals receive a lot of calls from printers. We are now able to differentiate ourselves, and they are willing to take the time to talk to us to learn about a real tool that they can take advantage of to make their lives easier.”

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Not only have customers been excited about the quality the DI press produces, but they are also pleased with the fast turnaround times Minuteman can deliver for four-color offset printing. “Our biggest challenge,” says Reed, “is getting our sales people to connect the dots in the customer’s mind so that we get credit for the quality and speed. We want to make sure they understand they are getting something extra for their money, including a higher line screen than they can get anywhere else.”

Environmental Benefits

While the DI’s on-press chemistry-free platemaking was a large part of the purchase decision process for Minuteman, who was attracted by the highly-automated, self-contained press with a small footprint that eliminates the need for a separate platemaker, the environmentally friendly operation of the press was an added benefit that the company has been able to take advantage of. “The fact that the press uses no platemaking chemistry or fountain solution, has no water consumption, and offers significantly reduced makeready

waste are among the first things we highlight when speaking to customers,” says Reed. “We are FSC certified, and we use a high percentage of vegetable-based inks, recycled papers, and papers manufactured with wind power. The Presstek 52DI fits perfectly into this environmental model for us.”

Doing Business with Presstek

Reed was also pleased with the way Presstek handled the purchase, installation and training associated with the press. “The experience we had leading up to the purchase and install was enjoyable,” he reports. “In fact, compared to other situations with suppliers, dealing with Presstek has been fantastic. They are very knowledgeable and quick to respond to questions. We had a very tight installation deadline and it came together almost perfectly.”

Minuteman promoted one of its two-color press operators to the 52DI. Reed points out, “He loves it, and picked up the operation quickly. The press is highly automated which allows it to come up to color quickly, making it extremely productive. Our press operator is also very proud of the work he can produce with the press. That means a great deal.” ■

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