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Steve Henck, VP of Production, CCI

CCI—Still on the Leading Edge

Industry

Commercial Printing

Application

Short run manuals

Printer

Océ VarioStream 9210
Océ VarioStream 7400 CX

Solution

LX Perfect Bind:
LX550 Unwind
LX530 Buffer
LX535 Slit Merge
LX560 Cutter
LX565 Stacker

From the beginning Bob Hegwood, founder of Commercial Communications, Inc. (CCI), believed digital printing technology was the way of the future. Always a forward-thinking company, the Hartland, Wisconsin-based CCI mixed the earliest digital equipment with traditional lithography to service a diverse client base. Today, 66% of the 23-year-old company’s work is producing service, training and instructional manuals on digital printers for its manufacturing clients.

“Printing and storing high numbers of training and technical manuals can be costly, so many of our manufacturing clients are turning to our print-on-demand (POD) capabilities to print only the quantities they need,” said Steve Henck, vice president of production.

Though the majority of their customers are manufacturers, CCI provides complete information distribution solutions to companies across industry sectors including publishing, financial, education, and healthcare.

CCI’s “beyond ink” philosophy helps companies manage all aspects of the information distribution process by seamlessly integrating POD, electronic delivery, and Kan Ban (just-in-time) management solutions into current processes, reducing unwanted inventories and document obsolescence. This maximizes value to all stakeholders while providing the most current information—when, where, and how they need it.

“We had been using traditional presses as well as high-speed cut sheet digital printers in this process,” Henck said, “but we wanted to increase our digital productivity by moving to continuous feed printers so that we could handle more volume, as well as a quantity of one, with greater efficiencies.”

After thoroughly researching the market, CCI invested in Océ continuous feed printers, including the VarioStream® 7400 CX Twin. The company also served as a pilot site for Océ’s VarioStream 9210. In addition, CCI chose the Lasermax Roll Systems LX Perfect Bind solution with the



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Muller Martini SigmaBinder.

“Durability of equipment was a key factor, as was ease of use and competitive pricing. We also wanted to be able to run multiple stock weights and do one-off printing and deliver into an in-line perfect binder,” Henck said.

CCI’s LX Perfect Bind solution includes an LX550 Unwinder, LX530 Buffer for lightweight paper, LX535 Slit Merge, LX560 Cutter and LX565 Stacker. Their versatile solution supplies book streams 3-up to the in-line perfect binder for POD applications such as short-run books, and can also slit and merge the web to create one-off books.

“All of the sites I visited who have moved into the LX family had nothing but good things to say about the durability, ease of use, competitive prices and service and support of the equipment,” Henck said.

Now Henck has good things to say himself. “This is the first time we’ve got into a roll fed system and we’re very happy with the investment,” he reports. “Our digital printers operate like a continuous web press—we’re able to do short run printing in an efficient manner, hold down our prices and also eliminate inventory and obsolescence for our customers.”

With the wide variety of work handled by the digital operation, Henck values the flexibility the LX Perfect Bind solution provides. The system can convert from in-line perfect binding to stacking unfinished output without moving equipment around. The stacks can then be transported to a hand-feed measuring station for the SigmaBinder or to a full shop of near-line binding equipment.

This new system has also opened up new opportunities. With the optional LX530 Buffer, CCI is now able to run lightweight or coated stock they were

unable to run on cut-sheet printers, allowing them to produce an even wider variety of jobs. The LX535 Slit Merge option offers additional possibilities. “We are now in a position to go to new customers where every single book is of a variable thickness because this is the only equipment out there that is capable of doing that efficiently,” Henck states.

In addition to the usual cost savings provided by using roll paper instead of cut sheet, CCI has also benefited from increased productivity. Total capacity on all of the digital printing equipment, cut-sheet and continuous, has increased by 106 percent with no added labor, and the continuous line runs nearly five times as much volume as the cut sheet printer line. They can now produce well over three million 8½ x 11 images in 24-hour period.

As Henck points out, the ease of operation and the reliability of the LX line are very important to avoid expensive downtime at high printer speeds. “Our staff picked up the LX touch screens very quickly and it didn’t take them too long to be familiar with the equipment,” he explains. “We also found that the durability of the LX equipment is phenomenal, but when we need help, we get an immediate response from our Lasermax Roll reps.”

Overall, CCI is very pleased with their decision. “Both the Lasermax Roll Systems equipment and Lasermax Roll as a company have definitely met our expectations and allowed us to achieve our vision,” said Henck. “The LX solutions have opened us up to new markets that we could not compete in before, and the upgradeable options will allow CCI to stay on the leading edge in meeting our client’s needs in a constantly changing Print On Demand marketplace.”

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