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Doug Anderson, Distribution Manager, Kenneth Copeland Ministries (right) pictured here with Thad Weikal, Mail Center Supervisor

Kenneth Copeland Ministries Invests in a Personal Touch

Industry

Ministry

Application

9 x 14 and 9 x 11 letters, one-up

Printer

Kodak Versamark VT3000

Solution

LX Stack:

LX550 Unwind
LX561 Cutter
LX566 Stacker

LX Roll-to-Roll:

LX550 Unwind
LX555 Rewind

Kenneth Copeland Ministries (KCM) may spread a message of Christianity that is centuries old, but they aren't afraid to use today's newest technologies to do so.

Founded by Kenneth Copeland and his wife Gloria over 40 years ago, KCM utilizes everything from television and radio broadcasts to webcasts, podcasts and DVDs to share their religious teachings. Now translated into more than 22 languages, such methods allow KCM's message to reach people from all over the world.

With headquarters in Fort Worth, Texas and additional offices in Canada, Ukraine, South Africa, England and Australia, it is important for KCM to keep in contact with its members and partners wherever their locations.

One simple, yet effective way for Kenneth Copeland to stay in touch with these individuals, no matter their age, economic stature or location, is by writing and sending a personal letter to them each month.

“The letter Kenneth sends out is

really what he has on his heart for the month that he wants to minister to this select group of people,” explained Thad Weikal, mail center supervisor for KCM. “Everyone who gets a copy of the letter has asked to receive it and has given to or been blessed by the ministry in some way.”

Additional pages of prayers, special offers or other ministry news usually accompany their daily and monthly letters, sent out to over 500,000 people each month. This means something as simple as an old-fashioned note needs to be handled in a high-tech way.

With only a 10 to 15 day production cycle each month, KCM initially used an in-house cut sheet printer to produce the letter, personalized with each recipient's name and information, and then outsourced the remaining pages.

Although this method enabled them to produce and send out the letters on time, the pages being printed offsite had a noticeably different appearance that distracted from the message being sent.



Kodak's inkjet color capabilities, along with the speed of the entire solution initially sold Weikal and Anderson, but the flexibility of the Lasermax Roll system was vital to their vision.

The LX Stack produces 9-inch by 14-inch and 9-inch by 11-inch letters in one-up, cut stacks, while the accompanying pages are printed and rewound at a separate time. The intermixed cut sheet and rewound output is then fed into a Böwe Bell + Howell inserter, where it is placed into envelopes and prepared for mailing.

"By using the LX line to essentially create two applications, the increase in productivity has been tremendous," Weikal said. "Because this system runs at 320 feet a minute and never stops, we now operate during regular business hours only, for five days a week instead of seven.

"We've saved hugely on labor costs and can get the job done in a fraction of the time."

"We feel that this is a very personal letter to each person," Weikal said. "Therefore, we try and maintain the privacy of the letters by using a closed faced carrier and live, non-metered, stamps.

"We don't want to give the impression of a bulk mailing with this letter, and keeping a consistent look and feel is an important part of that."

KCM was also experiencing problems with productivity. In order to generate the main letter each month in-house, three full-time shift crews were needed to run the printer around the clock for seven days a week— a process that was neither cost- nor time-efficient.

After struggling with this timely, labor-intensive operation for long enough, Weikal and KCM distribution manager Doug Anderson began investigating alternative methods to handle the large volumes more effectively.

"Thad and I knew it was important to find the right equipment for the job," explained Anderson. "We looked for several years at different companies and products, and really analyzed everything out there in terms of printers and finishing systems."

After extensive research, the choice was clear. A Lasermax Roll Systems LX Stack system with alternate LX555 Rewind teamed with a Kodak Versamark VT3000 printer was the perfect inline solution for KCM's letter application.

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KCM was surprised at how easily the solution worked, to not only solve their productivity issues, but also deliver a finished document that looked 100% personalized and professional.

"This solution really simplified something that was initially very difficult to do," Anderson said. "We can produce documents in multiple colors and in various sizes just by making simple adjustments."

KCM's new way of doing things has been so productive that they hope to pursue other endeavors in the future.

"This solution can produce over three times the amount of our current workflow," Weikal said. "Our hope is to do cooperative mailings with other ministries and non- profits in the future who could benefit, just as we have, from this system."

No stranger to advancing with technology, KCM couldn't be happier with the success they've had by updating their print operation with the LX equipment.

"Overall, our experience has been really good," Anderson said. "Our problems have been minimal and the folks at Lasermax Roll Systems have been really responsive.

"I feel we made the right choice with the LX and I would have no reason not to choose it again."

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