

Achieve Anything Customers Need

DPI Direct Utilizes Passion, Diligence, Innovation in Executing Its Capital Expenditure Plan

Robert Moran

Reduced waste and increased productivity—What more can a printer ask from a press? To start, how about operator friendliness, remote diagnostics, advanced degrees of automation, customization, multiprocess print capabilities, diverse finishing options, new business and more competitive positioning?

DPI Direct held to that wish list and even added a few more attractive accommodations—like a short web path, job recall, multiple versioning, quick changeover and simplified maintenance—when it issued its request for proposals on its new flexo press. The Poway, CA-based label specialist, founded in 2003, decrees, “We constantly improve our

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Matt Teeter, vice president, labels and packaging at DPI Direct

IN-PLANT POSITIONING

- Printer: DPI Direct, Poway, CA (San Diego area) | www.dpidirect.com
- Press: Edale FL3, 17-in. with full automation (AliiR)
- Print Stations: 8
- Installed: February 2018
- Applications: Primary flexo press, multiprocess print, embellishments to digital work

equipment and technology to remain at the innovative forefront of the industry.”

Sam Mousavi, president and CEO, holds all employees on all shifts to a clear mission statement. “We secure and maintain customer loyalty through partnership, commitment and open communication.” He also promises, “Our focus is to provide superior products, unmatched service and competitive pricing.”

PASSION MEETS DILIGENCE

Uncompromising passion and diligence were on full display when securing the plant's latest productivity-boosting asset—a fully automated, 17-in. Edale FL3 8-color flexo press. Matt Teeter, vice president, labels and packaging, reports on the purchase, installation and initial results.

"This press replaced an older 10-in. flexo press and is now our primary flexo press," he begins. "With the improved print quality that it affords, we are now able to transition jobs from our HP Indigo 6800 to the Edale FL3 when the optimal run length for digital is exceeded." Pointing to other attractions, he says, "It has the capability to accommodate multiprocess print. At this time, we are using it to add embellishments with the re-register capabilities to our digitally printed labels, like cold foil, flexo white ink, etc."

"Functionality was by far the most critical factor for us during the process," Matt stresses. "We had some very specific jobs that we needed to be able to do on this press and it was critical it was able to handle unique work."

He further comments, "For us, the most important step was providing our employees with precise and proper training. To maximize uptime and utilize the features of the new press immediately, we felt the employees needed to hit the ground running. Armed with upfront knowledge, our team quickly grasped the changes they were going to be experiencing in getting from installation to production as fast as possible."

Matt credits on-site instruction and hands-on learning opportunities with putting the team on good footing to succeed. "We had extensive training and support from both Edale and its North American distributor, Matik. The learning curve was larger than anticipated. Both were there for us every step of the way to provide the support and training necessary to get up and running on the press."

Commenting on dual functionality and complementary print processes on a single production floor, Matt remarks, "Nearly all short-run work is done on the HP. However, when PMS colors are a requirement, we are able to accommodate this on our FL3. Not necessarily short run; more so multiple versions, is where we are able to achieve significant time savings."

"With eight print stations, we can engage in multiple versions set up in different print stations and have everything ready to run very quickly. The press allows for quick change from print cylinder to print cylinder. Print stations not in use can be set up while the press is running. All of these improvements save time and materials."

FEATURES & FUNCTIONS

Matt relays, "At DPI, we believe that by having the best technology we can better serve our customers. The automation on the FL3 allows us to ensure the highest quality product across multiple operators and shifts."

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Automation on DPI Direct's new Edale FL3 ensures high-quality output, no matter the operator, no matter the shift.
Photo courtesy of DPI Direct

"Automation was why we chose Edale," he notes. "This press can come into full register without operator intervention. Many press manufacturers call a feature like this 'pre-registration,' or 'auto-registration,' but this is a misconception. Aligning the print cylinders is helpful, but bringing all eight print stations into perfect registration without making any manual adjustments is true automation. The AiiR system also allows us to maintain register throughout the entire run. The ability to get consistent quality through this breakthrough automation has reduced waste and increased our productivity."

In a similar vein, Matt reports, "We knew going in that we wanted a full UV press and didn't consider hot air dryers. We looked at the UV

LED drying option, but there was simply no data available at the time to justify the significant cost of the LED over the standard UV system. UV drying allows for the shortest possible web path on the press, which is a consideration in reducing waste."

CRITICAL INTERFACES

"From a business standpoint, connectivity is a must. From a flexo press standpoint, internet connectivity is mandatory for remote diagnostic capabilities and support, as well as pushing software updates to the press," Matt notes.

He insists, "The press is operator friendly. Touchscreen controls are intuitive and the man-machine interfaces are very easy to operate. Remote diagnostic capabilities are essential and allow for Edale to connect and quickly diagnose problems and push code updates if necessary to fix any issues that might arise."

As in every flexo shop, or all print enterprises for that matter, maintaining color and coming up to it is a major concern. Matt admits it's the case at DPI Direct, but he credits one of the new press' features with minimizing such worries. "We run a large number of spot colors for our customers that demand PMS colors. We mix all of our spot colors in-house and once the colors have been dialed in with the cor-

rect anilox and impression settings, the job recall function allows us to easily and consistently reproduce the same colors job in and job out."

The same holds for the plate cleaning function. "It's a huge time saver for our operators," Matt says. "They can quickly remove ink from the plates, so that changeover can happen in a short amount of time."

WINNING WAYS

"This press has allowed us to be more competitive on higher-volume jobs," Matt proclaims. "Work that we couldn't be competitive on previously is now something we are routinely winning. The flexibility of adding additional capabilities to the press is important... Our press is capable of cold foil, lamination, spot colors, varnishes and is fitted with a turnbar for reverse side printing. All of these features work exactly how we expect them to."

He elaborates on the point and says, "We have already had to look at a number of additions for some specific projects. Knowing that we could easily add a screen unit or a 1-color digital print unit for variable data or high-build varnishes is critical to our future success. We feel confident with Edale as our partner that we will be able to tackle any challenge that might come our way. Thanks to a great team of engineers, it can help us achieve anything that our customers might need!" ■

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