

thINK FORWARD

thINKforum.com | Fall | 2017

Inkjet Networking and Knowledge



thINK 2017 RECAP

Creating a world of possibilities with production inkjet technology.

2017 THINK CONFERENCE

With almost 600 attendees, over 70 speakers and 30 educational sessions the sheer number of existing Océ production inkjet press users seeking to network and share best practices with fellow users and non-adopters alike was readily apparent at this year's conference.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Did you miss a session during this year's thINK conference? Get an overview of all of the great thINK 2017 sessions and then view them on-demand!

ALLIANCE PRINTING & GRAPHICS SPOTLIGHT

Learn how Houston, TX-based Alliance Graphics and Printing opened the door to new inkjet business opportunities and markets with the installation of the Océ ColorStream 3700 printer.

thINK



PROFITABLE PRINT

Get the Inkjet Advantage
See back for details

Almost 600 print production professionals, analysts, partners and industry experts came together in Boca Raton, Fla., for the third annual thINK 2017 inkjet user group conference, making thINK the largest inkjet user's group in the world!

Across the board, post-event survey results told us what you "think" about thINK: EXCELLENT.

2017 thINK attendees enjoyed:

- Two pre-conference Events for those new to Inkjet and for well-seasoned inkjet professionals
- Powerful keynote speakers, including Captain Mark Kelly, James Cochrane, and Greg McKeown took the stage to inspire
- Networking roundtables provided the opportunity for attendees to dive deeper into session topics
- 11,389 connections were made using the innovative Klik bracelets, enabling attendees to simply tap to exchange contact information
- Educational sessions across production, inkjet, profitable print, business and marketing tracks
- Customer Experience Center (CEC) tours enabled hundreds of thINK attendees to tour the CEC and see press demos
- The sold-out Partner Pavilion had a record 40 partners available to answer questions related to the end-to-end inkjet production process
- Party at the Beach Club brought together all thINK attendees for an evening of fun

Remember, beyond the thINK conference, you have access to inkjet resources 365 day of the year. Visit thinkforum.com and make sure you are registered as a thINK member. Then enjoy access to a wide variety of tools and resources, including:

- +25 thINK 2017 event presentations, available on-demand
- +80 blog posts
- +35 webinars
- +120 white papers, case studies and industry guides
- 5 Inkjet Resource Publications

Lastly, I encourage you to be a contributor to the thINK community. thINK is about sharing best practices with one another. Raise your hand to share your story — contact me or select the "contact" button on the thinkforum.com website to volunteer to write a blog, be interviewed for a thINK Forward customer success story, or present best practices at an upcoming thINK conference.

On behalf of the thINK Board, I want to thank you for being a thINK member and for your contribution to our community!



Sincerely,
Mark DeBoer
thINK President
Darwill
Director of Customer Experience

INKJET TRANSITION

Alliance Printing and Graphics transitions to the Océ ColorStream 3700 press

INSTALLED
July 2017

**3 MILLION
PEAK
IMPRESSIONS**
August 2017

**7 MILLION
TOTAL
IMPRESSIONS IN
4 MONTHS**

99% UPTIME
on the Océ
ColorStream 3700

**75%
OF WORK
TRANSITIONED**

**TYPE OF WORK
TRANSITIONED**
Newsletters, booklets and
manuals

NEW APPLICATIONS

Alliance Printing and Graphics is now offering work that couldn't be — or wasn't — offered before, including color newsletters, booklets and manuals.

WHAT'S INSIDE

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Just as the production inkjet printing market continues to grow, so too does the Canon Solutions America production inkjet customer community. Check out the highlights from this year's conference.



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The 2017 thINK conference may be over, but that doesn't mean the education stops. Check out all of the sessions you can access at thinkforum.com.

10 / ALLIANCE PRINTING & GRAPHICS ✓

Learn how Houston-based Alliance Graphics and Printing expanded its fleet with leading-edge Canon print and workflow technology.



BEYOND OPPORTUNITY LIVES ESSENTIAL

NOW IS THE TIME TO TRANSITION YOUR BUSINESS TO INKJET

Inkjet page volume in the U.S. is forecast to grow 20% per year between 2015 and 2020, resulting in 60% of all digital impressions.*

“The market for production inkjet printer output continues to grow at rates that make most other print sectors envious. Inkjet’s flexibility in productivity, rapid turnaround times, and ability to print variable data — while providing attractive profit margins — is making inkjet a tool that print services providers and in-plant printing operations can’t live without.” — Marco Boer, I.T. Strategies



Canon Solutions America offers three insightful books to make your inkjet transition successful, your work flow efficiently, and tips to help your customers reap the benefits of inkjet technology. Discover them at: PPS.CSA.CANON.COM/INKJETBOOKS



INKJET WORKFLOW
The latest publication in our series of three inkjet books!

Canon
CANON SOLUTIONS AMERICA



CANON SEE IMPOSSIBLE

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INKJET OPPORTUNITIES

think 2017

CREATING A WORLD OF NEW POSSIBILITIES

NASA Captain Mark Kelly's keynote during the opening session started the 2017 thINK Conference on a high note.

Just as the production inkjet printing market continues to grow exponentially, so too does the burgeoning community of Canon Solutions America production inkjet customers. That sense of unity and information sharing serves as the foundation of thINK, an independent, member-driven community that comprises Canon Solutions America's Production Print Solutions division, its rapidly expanding base of production inkjet printing customers and key Canon partners.

Although thINK serves as a year-round resource to promote and foster inkjet networking and knowledge, the annual user group conference was created to bring key stakeholders together to further drive the maturation and market adoption of production inkjet technology.

Three years later, the thINK 2017 conference, held Oct. 9-11 at the elegant Boca Raton Resort in Boca Raton, Fla., was a sellout. With almost 600 attendees, over 70 speakers

“The breakout sessions were very informative. All of the speakers, including several current inkjet users who served as panelists for the first time at this year’s thINK conference, did a great job of putting meat behind their presentations.”

—Bob Radzis, Chief Customer Care Officer, SG360°, and Conference Chair



"The Klik bracelets gave us an opportunity to interact in a whole new way. They took what can often be an awkward moment and turned it into a fun opportunity to reach out and connect," said Michele Woodrum, team lead, Mail & Print Services, Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance.

and 30 educational sessions — including 30 Océ production inkjet press users sharing their experiences firsthand as panelists — the sheer number of existing Océ production inkjet press users seeking to network and share best practices with fellow users and non-adopters alike was readily apparent.

And while the sold-out conference was larger than last year and incorporated more advanced breakout sessions, segmented within four distinct tracks, to appeal to the ever-growing base of established inkjet adopters, the event still maintained its strong sense of intimacy to foster peer-to-peer networking and personal relationship building intentioned to extend beyond the event itself.

Special Attractions in 2017

Several new attractions and program highlights marked this year's thINK conference. For example:

- Its nearby proximity to the Canon Experience Center (CEC) in Boca Raton enabled thINK 2017 to also serve as the North American product launch of the Océ ProStream 1000. The continuous-feed inkjet press is designed for high-quality, 1,200 x 1,200 dpi commercial printing applications at speeds to 262 fpm on conventional coated and uncoated offset media. It was announced that Darwill will be the first Océ ProStream press beta site in the U.S., with installation planned for mid-November.
- More than 80 thINK conference attendees who have yet to embrace production inkjet printing attended a first-ever daylong "Inkjet 101" pre-conference program that featured panel discussions consisting of experienced Océ inkjet press users; an interactive session with Canon Solutions America's executive leadership team; and a tour of the CEC, including demonstrations of the Océ ProStream 1000, Océ

NEW CURRENCY: GETTING PEOPLE'S ATTENTION



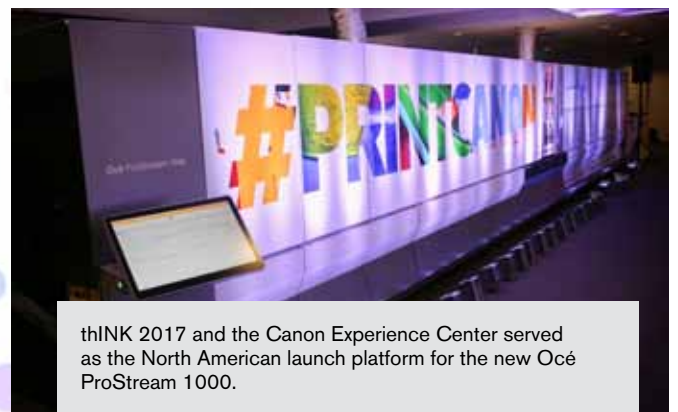
The USPS's Jim Cochrane delivered the 2017 thINK Conference closing keynote to a packed house.

As chief customer and marketing sales officer of the U.S. Postal Service, Jim Cochrane pays close attention to research on consumer habits and how people interact with mobile phones/electronic messaging versus physical mail.

Studies show that the attention span of a human is 8 seconds; it's 12 seconds for a goldfish. "So, how do you capture people's attention? That's the new currency," he told the thINK audience during his keynote presentation. One of the most effective ways, advised Cochrane, is to create a more immersive, tactile direct mail experience that incorporates digitally printed text, graphics and textures to enhance customer engagement.

"Physical paper remains a wonderful display device once it's printed on," he said. "It's more real to the brain. It's better connected to memory and understanding. It also involves more emotional processing, which is important for memory."

Cochrane is also very bullish on the opportunities that Informed Delivery will present to direct marketers and their digital print providers once a higher percentage of American households sign up for the free service.



thINK 2017 and the Canon Experience Center served as the North American launch platform for the new Océ ProStream 1000.

“Attending a conference like thINK allows me to ‘re-sharpen’ the saw so to speak, especially from being in an environment with the best of the best in the industry.”

*—Melvin Scott, Print Solutions,
BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee*

ColorStream 6000, Océ VarioPrint i300, Prisma workflow tools, media lab and more.

- A special video tribute and award presentation was bestowed upon Mal Baboyian, EVP of Large Format Solutions/Production Print Solutions at Canon Solutions America, who is retiring in December after a remarkable 40-year industry career at Océ and Canon.
- A record 40 thINK 2017 sponsors were set up in the Partner Pavilion, enabling attendees to interact with a broad range of media, digital finishing equipment and software solutions providers. And, to encourage interaction throughout this year's event, all conference attendees wore special Klik bracelets that enabled easy contact information exchange just by clicking bracelets together.
- A dynamic lineup of keynote speakers featured NASA astronaut Mark Kelly, commander of Space Shuttle Endeavour's final mission and the husband of former congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords; James Cochrane, chief customer and marketing sales officer and executive VP of the U.S. Postal Service; and Greg McKeown, a bestselling book author, blogger and corporate consultant.

thINK Executive Director Victor Bohnert kicked off the conference, noting the various opportunities thINK 2017 provides attendees to learn, share and be part of the community. “We continue to make sure that every component of our event is designed to drive results that you can readily apply to your business, whether you're a customer or a prospect.”



The thINK Board of Directors recognized Mal Baboyian's (center), EVP of LFS/PPS at Canon Solutions America, 40-year industry career prior to his retirement from Canon in December 2017.



(L to R) Lori Messina, Access Direct; Ken Fultz, Bookmasters; and Tricia Scavo, Broadridge, provided insights in to production efficiencies when running both continuous and sheet-fed inkjet devices.



Canon Solutions America's Guy Broadhurst discusses the future of continuous feed inkjet technology.

“The learning atmosphere and inspirational speakers proved to be an invaluable experience.”

—Lisa Stelter, Director, Print and Mail Services, Sanford Health

From the Mouth of Customers

Mark DeBoer, director of customer experience at Darwill and president of the thINK Board of Directors, was impressed with the larger number of printer panels at thINK 2017 in comparison to the previous year, including several first-time speakers. “[The user panels provide] a better way to engage the community aspect of the conference,” he said.

The ability to draw from a larger pool of current users illustrates the growth of Océ production inkjet press installations — among printers of all sizes and serving various market segments — in comparison to the inaugural thINK conference held in New York City just three years earlier.

For example, several thINK 2017 breakout session panelists featured cutsheet digital dry toner and liquid ink press users that had installed Océ VarioPrint i300 sheet-fed inkjet color presses as replacement devices. They all reported higher press uptime rates (as much as 97%), less maintenance, faster press speeds and lower total cost of ownership rates with their VarioPrint i300 devices.

Attendees who spent time investigating offerings in the Partner Pavilion at thINK 2017 also came away with the realization that paper, finishing, and workflow and variable data software developments are catching up with production inkjet press technology, which is helping to drive the industry transition to high-speed production inkjet printing.

Partly due to all of the positive feedback from those

who have made the transition, the overall mood among thINK 2017 attendees — both existing users and non-adopters still in the investigation stages — was even more optimistic than the previous year’s conference. “To me, people seemed more upbeat about their business prospects and how to take advantage of the opportunities,” said Bob Radzis, Customer Care Officer at SG360°, who also served as 2017 conference chair and is a member of the thINK board of directors.

“Clearly, the inkjet community continues to grow in size and has continued to mature in all areas such as paper options and finishing services,” said Lori Messina, executive vice president, Access Direct Systems Inc. “It also is incredible to see such a large diverse group so willing to come together and share best practices and real challenges experienced in order to help others in our industry be successful.”

Fellow thINK board member Dave Johannes — and the 2016 conference chair — felt a similar enthusiasm among 2017 attendees about inkjet printing and the sophisticated 1:1 personalization capabilities that it enables.

“The future of our industry and print in general is very bright. We may actually be at the start of a printing Renaissance in which opportunities exist for those with vision,” Johannes said.

“More importantly, we need to recognize that print is no longer constrained by static content. Instead, a piece of paper essentially is now a blank digital canvas.”

thINK 365

THINK MEMBER BENEFITS EXTEND BEYOND THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The 2017 thINK conference may be over, but that doesn't mean the education stops. During the three-day event, both new and existing thINK members united to share inkjet experiences, learn from experts and hear from some of the most successful inkjet service providers in the industry. More than 30 sessions — designed for all levels of inkjet experience and awareness — were held throughout the event. Now, all of the thINK conference presentations are available in the resource center at thINKforum.com, giving thINK members unprecedented access to a robust library of inkjet-related knowledge.

Visit thINKforum.com to access 2017 conference sessions.

Production Efficiencies When You Have Both Sheetfed & Continuous

Creating production efficiencies is vital to your business, however, creating those efficiencies across different print platforms can be a challenge. In this session, hear how three Canon Production Inkjet customers successfully combined their continuous feed and sheet-fed platforms together to grow their business and gain production efficiencies.

Featured Speakers:

Michael Poulin, Canon Solutions America - Moderator
Ken Fultz, Bookmasters
Lori Messina, Access Direct
Tricia Scavo, Broadridge

Finishing: We've Got It All Backwards

Finishing is the last step in the creation of printed products, but it may well be the most important step to creation of value and efficiency. In order to compete, printshops need to become more efficient and creative in the aspects before and after the print process. Join moderator Marco Boer from IT Strategies with a panel of three inkjet users to hear them discuss the challenges and opportunities in finishing.

Featured Speakers:

Marco Boer, IT Strategies - Moderator
John DiNozzi, Access Direct
Brad Sharp, Bookmasters
Jared Carr, Merrill

Inkjet Workflows: How To Make Your Work Flow Efficiently

Production inkjet presses workflows can bring new opportunities and new challenges to your business. These new challenges require new workflows, tools and ideas to help increase volume, optimize production and maximize profits. This session addresses many of the issues that affect these new world requirements and workflows.

Featured Speaker:

David Zwang, Zwang & Co.

Selling High Speed Inkjet – It's Time To Make Your Sales Process A Differentiator

Inkjet technology offers your business highly profitable volume as long as your sales organization can sell value! Learn the selling skills necessary to make adding inkjet technology profitable, how to access the capabilities of your current team, and build a plan to transition your team into a high-performance sales organization.

Featured Speaker:

Kate Dunn, Director, InfoTrends

What Your Print Customers Don't Know... Can Hurt Your Business

Project Peacock set off on a mission to educate print buyers, agencies and brands about print opportunities with inkjet, digital and wide-format printing. Learn how to open customer doors for

inkjet print conversations without ruffling feathers.

Featured Speaker:

Deborah Corn, Principal, Print Media Centr

Profitable Print with ColorStream

You know that production inkjet is the way to compete in today's competitive market. But is continuous feed the way to go for your business? Learn how ColorStream users were able to convert their investment into a profit generating venture.

Featured Speakers:

Brad Simpson, Canon Solutions America - Moderator
Ike Vander Horst, Groupo
Calidata Thomas Greg
Rob Herman, NAC

Tackling Production Print Efficiencies, Document Integrity & Tracking

Your customers are depending upon you to deliver value-enhancing vehicles for transactional, transpromo, and one-to-one marketing communications, all without missing a beat on meeting service level agreements. Discover how three customers help their clients tackle barriers to customer service excellence by leveraging workflow automation and overcoming security, tracking, productivity and efficiency hurdles across their print and mail operations.

Featured Speakers:

Lisa Weese, Canon Solutions

America - Moderator
Sim Merekar, Symcor
Andrew Hart, Epiq Systems
Bill Augustad, Conduent
Chuck Jennings, Huntington Bank

Papertalk

Substrates are at the heart of inkjet success. Learn about the various media categories and performance expectations of media used in both continuous feed and sheet-fed inkjet presses. You will hear about recent trends in inkjet media development, and new ink sets that are available now and coming in the near future, along with what these new ink sets mean to the future of new paper development for inkjet.

Featured Speaker:

David Croll, Océ Production Printing Products

The Role of Print in Omni-Channel Campaigns

An effective omni-channel marketing campaign delivers a consistent experience and encourages prospects to engage across media channels. Print can play an important role in reinforcing this consistency and in showcasing the power of personalization. Learn about the latest trends in omni-channel communications and how Canon Inkjet Technology plays a critical role in this mix.

Featured Speakers:

Nicole Tully, Canon Solutions America
Matt Swain, Infotrends

Planning for Vertical Market Success

Print organizations can find more sales and profit by focusing on vertical markets, but which are the right ones? This session discusses the key steps in evaluating vertical market opportunities, determining those that are a best fit for your capabilities, and where to find data to support sales and marketing efforts.

Featured Speakers:

Elizabeth Gooding, Insights Forum - Moderator
Fred Van Alstyne, Content Critical
Steve Hegna, Arna Marketing

High Speed Inkjet: On Sheets

Where does sheet-fed production inkjet fit into your business? This session provides insight as to how Canon continues to develop the VPi300 series allowing you to gain profitable revenue and drive cost out of your print operation.

Featured Speakers:

Eric Degoeijen, Océ Production Printing Products
Adam LeFevre, Specialty Print Communications
David Croll, Océ Production Printing Products

Workflow Optimization

The transition to inkjet doesn't have to be daunting as long as you prepare an optimal workflow that leverages the advantages of inkjet technology. Gain the tools to do just that by planning for digital asset management, composition, automated finishing, automated reprints and color consistency. Hear how customers have unified their upstream processes to deliver optimized inkjet output!

Featured Speakers:

Ed Jansen, Canon Solutions America - Moderator
Jeff Matos, Broadridge
Dave Schuller, Venture Solutions

The Digital Journey: Color Print to Dynamic Content Management

Explore the world of dynamic 1:1

messaging with digital color print. A panel discusses the journey from conventional to color digital printing and the path to harness dynamic content to drive 1:1 marketing. Hear firsthand from customers and industry experts on their lessons learned and the process of the digital conversion.

Featured Speakers:

Dave Johannes, thINK - Moderator
Matt Swain, Keynote Intelligence
Mark DeBoer, Darwill
Murali Dorai, Symcor

Marketing Your Business: 5 Ways to Get the Word Out

You've made the decision to invest in inkjet. Or maybe you've acquired some amazing new finishing equipment. Now it's time to get the quick wins you need to gain marketing momentum. In this session, we'll show you five ways to get the attention of customers and prospects and sell them on your new services.

Featured Speaker:

Sarah Mannone, Trekk

Commercial Success: Leverage Inkjet to Create New Revenue Streams

We've seen ongoing market adoption of production inkjet printing technology for direct mail, transactional and book/publishing applications. Inkjet is now poised to overtake digital toner-based and conventional printing for many general commercial printing applications, thanks to enhanced inksets; greater substrate choices, including standard coated and uncoated offset stocks; and more finishing options, such as booklet-making and perforating. Hear three commercial printers describe how they're relying on VarioPrint i300 sheetfed color inkjet presses to meet — and exceed — customer demands for high-quality commercial, and other short-run, on-demand work.

Featured Speakers:

Mark Michelson, *Printing Impressions* - Moderator
Ken Chaletzky, Copy General
John Mashia, IMS Direct
Mike Zaia, Medius

The Future of Continuous Feed Production Inkjet

Canon is proud to be a leader in inkjet production markets. It comes with continuous cutting-edge innovation. So, what is Canon doing to remain the market leader?

Featured Speakers:

Guy Broadhurst, Canon Solutions America
Crit Driessen, Océ Production Printing Products

Practical Approach to Color Profiling

Learn how to build customized color profiles for your inkjet press. Discover the power of process control and how to apply it to your total quality control routine. Learn how to manage your profiles and papers at the press level with thINKforum.com.

Featured Speaker:

Jan Lemieux, Canon Solutions America

Inkjet Resources 365 Days of the Year

While the thINK community is known best for the annual, interactive thINK Conference, thINK extends beyond the conference to facilitate inkjet education 365 days of the year. Are you tapping into all of the thINK resources available to you as a thINK member?

Featured Speakers:

Cindy Cumings, thINK Forum
Andrea Shue, Canon Solutions America

In-Plants: Achieving Operational Excellence & Strategic Relevance

Hear from three in-plants how they successfully implemented inkjet to their in-plant print operations.

Featured Speakers:

Ron Goglia, Cigna - Moderator
Chuck Werninger, Houston Independent School District
Ravinder Birdi, Intersections

Profitable Print with Sheet-Fed Inkjet

The VarioPrint i300 inkjet press provides the ability to expand your application portfolio on a more cost-effective press, sell new print applications, bring out-sourced work in-house, and offer new billable services to support these new applications ... which results in new revenue streams and profitable print. Discover how three printer service providers grew their operations with the VarioPrint i300.

Featured Speakers:

Chad Cook, Canon Solutions America - Moderator
Christine Soward, DMS ink
Diane Fischer, L&D Mail Masters
Keith Chadwell, Sourcelink

G-Wiz of G7

Everybody talks about G7, but how does this offset based standard play into digital inkjet printing? This session looks at possible implementations of G7 for digital inkjet presses, analyzing the pros and cons of the different approaches.

Featured Speakers:

Jan Lemieux, Canon Solutions America
Andrea Glissmann, Océ Production Printing Products

Color Inkjet is the New "BLACK" – Technology Trends That Will Change the Way You Work

Like it or not, finally after 10 years, the color inkjet train has left the station, will you catch it at the next stop? Learn about the latest trends in the migration from toner-based monochrome print to color inkjet.

Featured Speakers:

Gina Ferrera, Madison Advisors
Gary Simpson, Madison Advisors

TURNING UP THE VOLUME

Flanking Alliance's Océ ColorStream 3700, Mike Hogeboom (left), Production Manager, and Paul Releford, Inkjet Operator. Releford began his career on offset, then took over the Océ black-and-white roll equipment back in the 1990s, and lately he has been running the company's sheet-fed digital press. "The ColorStream is by far the easiest piece of equipment he's ever had to run," Birmingham affirms.

Like any savvy business professional, Jeff Birmingham understands that to be successful your company has to keep evolving. As president of Houston-based Alliance Printing and Graphics: Print Evolved, Birmingham continually enhances his shop's offerings. To that end, throughout the company's 30-year history, Birmingham has expanded on the shop's original offset capabilities to become a full-service shop, adding digital flexography for label production, digital storefront technology for online ordering, digital printing for short-run and on-demand work, and, most recently, with the installation of the Océ ColorStream 3700, continuous feed inkjet printing for fast turnaround, high-volume, high-quality output.

Alliance has not only expanded its offerings, it has also grown in size, opening a second Houston location following the July 2017 purchase of the new equipment.

While committed to technology and the innovation it fosters, every piece of hardware and software purchased has to both benefit Alliance's customers and add value to the business.

For example, 15 years ago Alliance added online ordering to its cadre of services. The thinking Birmingham says, was "how easy can I make it for customers to order." Creating an online portal entry for Alliance's customers, "helped shore up consistent long-term customers," he acknowledges.

Over the last 15 years, "we only lost one customer we set up a portal for," Birmingham adds.

Alliance's client base spans mom-and-pop shops to leading manufacturers, insurance companies, and also some oil and gas businesses.

"Inkjet is the wave of the future. Printing is evolving toward inkjet. I'm just glad we got into it fairly early."

Earlier this year, Alliance signed a five-year contract with one of the world's largest manufacturers of heating, ventilation and air conditioning products, to produce its manuals and warranty parts booklets.

The multi-billion enterprise, which is headquartered in Japan, is consolidating its U.S. operations into a 4 million-square-foot facility just outside of Houston, with a projected growth rate of 70%.



While the company was already a customer of Alliance, the five-year contract “was a game-changer for us,” Birmingham notes, “allowing us to move forward in a way that fit our customer’s needs and also ours.”

Birmingham knew to be able to produce the volume the new contract dictates — the manufacturer turns out 15,000 air conditioning units daily, all of which need warranty and instruction manuals — his company would need a digital printing production workhorse that could deliver high-quality output, fast turnaround, and also be cost-effective. While Alliance already had digital presses in-house, including a cut-sheet Canon imagePRESS C10000VP Color Digital Press (the company purchased a second one when it bought the Océ ColorStream 3700), they are used for short-run, on-demand high-quality multi-color jobs.

“Once I started learning about inkjet,” Birmingham says, “it was the obvious solution. If we hadn’t moved to inkjet, we would be running our other equipment 24 hours a day, seven days a week. With the ColorStream and our roll-to-roll, we are taking care of it in eight hours a shift, five days a week, with one operator.”

While there are a lot of good presses on the market, Birmingham says, the ColorStream’s unique capability to economically output both color and black-and-white was a deal breaker.

The decision to purchase the ColorStream, along with an Océ PRISMAproduction server print workflow and output management system, plus a second Canon imagePRESS C10000VP, followed the same purchase journey as all of Alliance’s recent technology and equipment purchases.

“We find out what our customer needs, and have them buy into the solution, and become a partner of theirs,” Birmingham explains.

Which is why Birmingham found Canon to be the perfect partner. “They bought into what we were trying to do, and helped us find a solution,” Birmingham notes. “They are in it together with you 100%. They have your back. I knew they weren’t going to let me fail.”

He specifically points to his relationship with Canon Solutions America printing sales consultant Frank P. Tummino, who “still calls me with new business ideas for the inkjet. In today’s world, we think we’ve gotten away from relationship selling, but you have to believe in the person, and in the company. That’s always how I’ve done business.”

Although Birmingham anticipated many of the benefits the Océ ColorStream inkjet press delivers — there are no plates, no set up, so turn time is so much faster, he says — he was surprised at just how much uptime it gave the shop, as well as how easy it is to run.

“It is unbelievable how well it runs and runs and runs without any interruptions,” he says. “It makes my life very easy.”

Another unexpected bonus: Alliance is able to add

color to some of its clients’ black-and-white newsletters and booklets, “and we are coming out being competitive with black-and-white even when adding color,” Birmingham says.

“That was a bonus we didn’t know we were going to have,” he adds. “When we were buying the press, and saw how cost-effective it was, we realized this was a possibility. We ended up doing some pre-selling to our customers on the idea. True to form, Canon came up with pricing structures for us.”

The benefits that the Océ Colorstream 3700 provides naturally extend to Alliance’s entire customer base. “Being able to produce collateral on inkjet, our customers don’t have to keep a lot of inventory tied up,” he explains. “More and more, our customers want just-in-time inventory.”

Alliance uses the ColorStream and imagePRESS in tandem to produce booklets for many of its products, running the cover on the imagePRESS and the inside pages on the ColorStream. The imagePRESS is outfitted with booklet-making capabilities and a range of in-line feeding and finishing accessories, letting the print further expand applications it offers to the market.

“The PRISMAproduction server ties it all together,” Birmingham says. “It’s a great platform to use to share files, plus its scheduling capabilities allows us to prioritize our work and run all our devices from it. We probably only use one-twentieth of its capabilities right now, but plan to add more functionality as needed. The goal is to have it manage our whole print shop.”

Inkjet is the wave of the future, says Birmingham. “Inkjet is where printing is evolving toward,” Birmingham says. “I’m just glad we got into it fairly early.

“We added the tagline ‘Print Evolved’ around three years ago,” he adds. “We are trying to live it now.”

ALLIANCE

PRINT EVOLVED

AT A GLANCE

ALLIANCE PRINTING AND GRAPHICS

Houston, TX

Markets Served: Healthcare, financial services, retail, pharmaceutical, insurance, education, banking

Capabilities: Offset, digital flexography, digital printing and continuous feed inkjet printing

Ancillary Services: Online ordering



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thINK FORWARD

Inkjet Networking and Knowledge

 **.32** ¢ / 4.8 HOURS

Total cost to print this issue of the thINK newsletter: 32¢
Press Time: 4.8 hours
Compare that to ~90¢ per piece and ~10 hours of press time on a competitive toner device, based on a quantity of 4,500.
That's profitable print!

PRODUCTION NOTES

PAPER: Verso *Blazer Digital*® Gloss, 100 lb. text
PRESS: Canon Océ VarioPrint i300

thINK is an independent community of Canon Solutions America production print customers, solution partners, and print industry experts. Led by some of the most successful inkjet service providers in the country, it provides a forum for members to network, gain knowledge, discuss common challenges, and share best practices.

