THE BIG PICTURE
PebblePost helps marketers capture online activity, followed by a customized direct mail piece sent within 12-24 hours of engagement.

APPLICATION HIGHLIGHT
Personalized calendars, some now output on its Océ VarioPrint i300 sheetfed printer, has turned into a profitable enterprise for pii.

COUNTDOWN TO thINK 2016
Network and learn best practices by participating in the largest user group for production inkjet printing.

INKJET JUSTIFICATION

Pinnacle Data and Core Publishing Solutions Have Enhanced Their Workflows and Color Capabilities

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As President of the thINK board, I am pleased to represent the thINK community and collaborate with other board members to assist in creating a dynamic, engaged community in which Canon Solutions America production print customers can achieve the highest levels of success in our ever-changing printing industry.

To do this, we are bringing you resources like this quarterly publication, *thINK Forward*, designed to keep you apprised of industry trends and innovations, as well as to offer business-building ideas.

Plus, members have access to thINKforum.com — featuring a wide range of resources including white papers, on-demand webinars and thINK 2015 conference presentations. (Don't miss the latest resource we just added: "The Inkjet Edge: How to Transition Your Business to Inkjet").

And, of course — after setting a high bar at the thINK 2015 conference with over 300 attendees — we are planning an even more successful thINK 2016. More than 400 attendees are expected to attend, making it the largest user group event for inkjet production printing. The thINK board is planning expanded educational opportunities with sessions on both the business and production sides of inkjet, as well as many networking opportunities.

Be sure to register for thINK 2016 soon (thINKForum.com/event). We look forward to seeing you there!

Mark DeBoer
thINK President

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Mark DeBoer
thINK President

WHAT'S INSIDE

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4 / CORE PUBLISHING SOLUTIONS SPOTLIGHT ›
Not only has Thomson Reuters' publishing arm seen an improvement in workflow since it installed an Océ VarioPrint i300, it plans to ramp up its monthly volume with the press' help.

‹ 6 / PINNACLE DATA SOLUTIONS SPOTLIGHT
Pinnacle Data Solutions found that the installation of Océ JetStream and Océ VarioPrint i300 inkjet presses proved to be optimal printing solutions to solve its production problems.

INKJET TRANSITIONS

Progressive Impressions International (pii) transitions to the Océ VarioPrint i300:

INSTALLED
July 2015

PEAK IMPRESSIONS
No. of impressions as of 4/7/2016: 35 million
Peak month of impressions: August 2016 | 6,064,216
% of work transitioned over: 40%

UPTIME ON THE VARIOPRINT i300
98.72%

TYPE OF WORK TRANSITIONED
pii has transitioned its direct mail marketing letters to the VarioPrint i300. Run lengths of 5,000 to 70,000 letters have proven to be the sweet spot for pii, but longer and shorter run lengths can also be completed, exhibiting the versatility of the press.

NEW APPLICATIONS
pii recently used the VarioPrint i300 to create a self-mailer campaign on 9-pt. stock. The campaign was for a client who wanted more variability and personalization, which wasn't possible via offset printing.

REAL-TIME DIRECT MAIL

In our digital age, responses to online engagement need to have a sense of immediacy. Using banner advertisements and email campaigns can be effective, but there is no staying power: emails are erased and browsers are closed. Increasingly, digital ads are being blocked.

We know that personalized digital direct mail printing may be the best way to grab a consumers' attention, but how can a marketer target a consumer who has engaged digitally, while ensuring that the direct mail sent in response is timely and relevant? New York-based PebblePost is helping to solve this problem by taking "real-time data from consumers' actions on a website, and converting that dynamically into personalized direct mail," explains David Cooperstein, CMO at PebblePost.

In a concept the company calls Programmatic Direct Mail, PebblePost has created cloud-based software to help brand owners and marketers tag their websites to capture online site activity, and then target consumers with a customized mail piece within 12 to 24 hours. "Unlike banner ads," he says, "this is a much more tangible reminder that you visited a site and had an intent to purchase."

Whether the consumer typed a product into the search bar, added something to their cart and then decided otherwise, or simply viewed a product but neglected to make a purchasing decision, marketers can choose how to target consumers based on various use cases including behavioral segments, products most-often viewed and geographic location.

Using the direct mail campaign management tools provided by PebblePost, brand owners and retailers can choose from a variety of campaigns, ranging from a simple postcard sent to remind consumers to return to the site, to unlimited creative variations featuring the ability to offer various levels of promotions.

Depending on how the website is tagged, marketers can personalize the mail even further by choosing specific promotions they want to send to individual customers or testing various promotions in control groups to see which offer performs best. To correct some of the challenges of digital marketing placements, marketers can also set a frequency cap to decide how often direct mail is sent to a particular customer, typically once per 30-day period.

"We're providing a platform for marketers to be able to manage direct mail campaigns as they do digital efforts."

The tools were built to accommodate issues like frequency caps, variable testing options and targeting needs, giving marketers maximum flexibility," he says.

The response to this platform has been successful. On average, the platform has generated a 20% response rate. This compares to a more typical 3% response rate for traditional direct mail and less than 1% for most digital channels. According to Cooperstein, the conversion rate for those who respond averages 40%, with a "total mail conversion rate" of 8-10%. Users of PebblePost's platform are seeing 15 times the ad spend being brought back as revenue.

Cooperstein explains that this Programmatic Direct Mail platform changes the way that brands communicate with consumers. PebblePost handles everything from software tools to postage, digital print production outsourcing, analytics and optimization. He believes that there will be strong future growth in what the United States Postal Service now refers to as digitally reactive direct mail.

"PebblePost's platform illustrates how well print and online marketing strategies can complement each other in real-time by leveraging online consumer behavior with variable data digital printing. Inkjet technology provides the ideal outlet to marry the inherent speed and cost advantages of production inkjet digital printing output with the benefits of data-driven Programmatic Direct Mail. As multi-channel marketing strategies continue to evolve, so too will direct marketing campaigns that are driven by the latest in on-demand inkjet printing technology."

Mark Michelson
Editorial Director,
Printing Impressions

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SOLUTION SHOULDERS THE PUBLICATION LOAD

An operator mans the console at control central on Core Publishing Solutions' new Océ VarioPrint i300 sheetfed production inkjet press.

There is an interesting dichotomy of thought when it comes to print providers with roots that trace back to the 19th century. While printers with such a rich and storied history tend to be pigeonholed as loyal toward mature and time-tested methods of manufacturing, one could conversely contend that in order to remain relevant and keep the lights on, adhering to the latest technology is paramount.

Take Core Publishing Solutions, the Eagan, Minn.-based print production arm of business/professional publisher extraordinaire Thomson Reuters. The printing operation — one of the largest in North America — has come a long way since its founding in 1872 as West Bookstore & Publishing, where it developed a niche in the world of legal publishing [and eventually becoming the content engine behind the online Westlaw legal research service]. West merged with Thomson Publishing after its acquisition by The Thomson Corp. in 1996, greatly expanding its market scope, and Thomson obtained global news and financial information business Reuters in 2008.

> ## "Specifically for the VarioPrint i300, we are looking to ramp up to a volume of five to six million impressions per month."

Core Publishing Solutions has 440 employees working at its 1.3 million-square-foot facility, of which 650,000 are dedicated to production. The shop produces perfect bound, case bound and loose-leaf titles for Thomson Reuters and more than 100 other

publishers doing business primarily in the professional and scholarly, higher education and trade markets.

The Core Publishing Solutions printing facility boasts web and sheetfed machines, complemented by both continuous-feed and digital sheetfed toner-based presses. The company had previously been relying on the services of two Canon imagePRESS C7010 color toner machines and three black-and-white Océ VarioPrint 6000s. According to Larry Soler, director of prepress, press and digital departments, Core Publishing Solutions had come to a technological crossroads.

"Like all printers, we work toward solutions to manage shorter run lengths and quicker turn times," Soler says. "We were looking at a growing print-on-demand workload, and we needed to beef up our output because the current imagePRESS C7010s were overloaded. We were churning out more than one million impressions per month between the two printers."

What the plant needed, Soler notes, was a solution to support the organization's business model as a high quality, service oriented, short-run book manufacturer. As part of the vetting process, Vickie Jensen — the technical supervisor for prepress and digital print at Core Publishing Solutions — notes how the company needed to review its costs to establish what new device would provide the best return on investment. It became a question of digital toner and click charges versus the production inkjet printing model.

In the end, Core Publishing Solutions opted to go with the Océ VarioPrint i300 sheetfed printer from Canon Solutions America. The press was installed during November and December of 2015.

"Canon Solutions America showed good faith with us, as we utilized our technology rider on the imagePRESS C7010 toner machines to get into the VarioPrint i300 inkjet press," Jensen points out.

While Core Publishing Solutions doesn't have a good deal of trailing results to provide an in-depth evaluation of the VarioPrint i300, Jensen notes the installation process was quite smooth, aided by the work of a focused project team. The company benefitted from good vendor connections for the pre-work of electrical, networking, power and air.

From a workflow standpoint, Jensen relates that many of their custom workflows are using Océ PRISMAsync controllers, utilizing multiple data sources. One production workflow has been completely migrated, she says, and at press time they were working on an automated XML-based workflow.

While still a newbie on the shop floor, the VarioPrint i300 has made life easier for a number of Core Publishing Solutions' customers. One of the greatest benefits has been using a single print-on-demand process for both black-and-white and color custom reports. The jobs were previously produced on a combination of three devices. Now, the VarioPrint i300

handles all 750,000 impressions per month.

"That allows us to service a particular customer that requires same-day printing, binding and shipping, which will improve our overall customer service," Jensen remarks. "We have been able to deliver a quality product in the short cycle time required for their products."

What this machine ultimately represents, according to Soler, is an evolutionary process that sees inkjet printing capabilities as the driver behind Core Publishing extending its dominance and continuing to be a go-to provider of excellence in book publishing, while meeting the goals of publishers and outside authors alike.

Moving forward, Soler foresees the company taking advantage of new upgrades being made available for the VarioPrint i300, including a new spot pre-coat called ColorGrip. The pre-coat is placed only where areas will receive ink, allowing the ink to sit high on the sheet and provide better print contrast.

Core Publishing Solutions will also receive a boost to its capacity once the new BLM600 complete booklet making system for the VarioPrint i300 becomes available later this year.

"We will work to optimize the VarioPrint i300 speed and quality that supports us to maximize the whole production value stream," Soler says. "Specifically for the VarioPrint i300, we are looking to ramp up to a volume of five to six million impressions per month. This includes additional loose-leaf products and newsletters once the BLM600 product line is released in Q3. In addition, the new ColorGrip ink set and bonding agent will allow us to migrate products with coated stocks."

Larry Soler
Director of Prepress,
Press & Digital

AT A GLANCE
CORE PUBLISHING SOLUTIONS
Thomson Reuters
Eagan, Minn.

Markets Served: Publishing solutions for the professional, scholarly, higher education and trade markets

Capabilities: Color and monochrome sheetfed digital printing, web offset printing, binding (perfect bound, adhesive burst bound, Smyth sewn case, saddle stitch, loose leaf)

Ancillary Services: Electronic books, warehousing and fulfillment, custom kitting

INKJET: PANACEA FOR PAIN POINTS

Workflow software integration played a role in Pinnacle Data Systems choosing the Océ JetStream continuous-feed color inkjet press.

As viable candidates for production inkjet printing technology go, one would be hard-pressed to find a firm with a greater need than Pinnacle Data Systems of Suwanee, Ga. This poster child status has been replaced by a solution that provided relief to numerous pain points.

The company debuted in 1999 as an accounting software company that marketed and customized ERP solutions. Pinnacle added print-and-mail document output services two years later, essentially as an add-on service for its existing software client base.

Now, the firm exclusively focuses on print and electronic document output and hosting services, backed by facilities in Phoenix and Birmingham, Ala., as well as suburban Atlanta, along with a satellite in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, which specializes in software development and electronic products. Pinnacle Data Systems employs 240 workers across its network.

The company specializes in transactional mail services — the printing and mailing of business-critical communications — as well as electronic presentment and payment, document hosting/archiving, one-to-one marketing communications (transpromo) and client interface development (custom portals).

Nothing but extremely high-value documents ... could justify the more expensive running costs required for toner color output.

While Pinnacle Data Systems was not suffering from decades-old inefficiencies, the firm nonetheless was in need of a solution to satisfy the evolving needs of its client base. Robert Reddinger, company president and CEO, identified several variables that nudged Pinnacle toward high-speed production inkjet:

▶ Its limited adoption of color output due to the high operating costs of toner-based printers. Nothing but extremely high-value documents — high net worth brokerage statements, for example — could justify the more expensive running costs required for toner color output.

▶ Inconsistencies between printed and electronic presentation in regards to brand marketing was another issue.

"Clients would create static color inserts to go along with the billing documents and would selectively insert them — providing limited, if any, ability to offer personalized, targeted messages," Reddinger says. "This was compounded by their ability to offer full-color messaging online, yet they were limited to monochrome (or highlight color) print-based offerings."

▶ Pinnacle Data Systems was often saddled with a large number of SKUs for preprinted client form shells, which also presented warehousing, logistical and obsolescence issues. An example of this was being able to offer distributed print in real time across Pinnacle's three U.S. sites. In the past, it would require ordering materials and getting the supply chain in place for each site before a job could process.

"Prior to adopting inkjet, we also had a large fleet of highlight color printing systems, which were both expensive to run and challenging to keep operational … highlight color was always a difficult technology from a maintenance/uptime perspective," Reddinger notes.

Facing these issues, Reddinger and his executive team set out to find a solution, exploring both toner and inkjet digital printing alternatives. In the end, the company opted to install Océ JetStream continuous-feed color inkjet presses, in part, because of Canon Solution America's tight integration with Pinnacle Data Systems' workflow software (PRISMA and SEFAS Innovation).

The move to production inkjet has categorically paid dividends. Color usage is no longer reserved for high-end output products. The color/monochrome inconsistency between electronic and printed content went by the wayside. And, as for the practice of warehousing preprinted shells, its current "white paper factory" structure enables the redirecting of a job to another facility through Pinnacle's workflow management system.

Pinnacle's initial transition into color inkjet printing did require a learning curve. "The implementation of our first inkjet press was not without its share of growing pains," Reddinger explains. "Everything we knew about color was from the sheetfed world — we had several Xerox toner-based color devices at the time — which did not translate into good color knowledge for inkjet. Additionally, our first installation was a roll-to-sheet configuration. Since we were relatively early into sheetfed inkjet, the finishing process also proved to be quite challenging during the early days of the installation."

The workflow software integration was fairly straightforward, as Pinnacle was already using Océ's PRISMA. The tricky part, Reddinger recalls, was getting the workflow timing honed in to prevent the machine from stopping, which led to startup waste as the machine cycled up.

"The biggest challenges we faced on the programming side revolved around color management and color matching," he says. "Getting a customer to accept an inkjet version of their logo could require, and can still consist of, multiple iterations to get to client acceptance."

The internal efficiencies gained from acquiring the JetStream inkjet presses cannot be underscored enough, however. Pinnacle Data Systems went from 500 SKUs of client-specific forms to roughly 30 specialized applications. This is most remarkable considering that previously, the company had been tying up significant amounts of its working capital in the preprinted forms.

"We were essentially stacking cash up on our warehouse shelves in the form of client stock," Reddinger says, wryly.

A second inkjet revolution is about to take place at Pinnacle Data Systems. The company recently installed its first Océ VarioPrint i300 sheetfed inkjet press, and Reddinger calls its acquisition "by far, the smoothest technology upgrade we have ever done." Pinnacle still operates six toner-based, sheetfed color devices throughout its network, and the goal is to transition all of that work to inkjet using the VarioPrint i300, along with treated inkjet stock to convert the remainder of the color toner-based work.

"This will produce increased margins for Pinnacle Data Systems and lower costs for our clients, so everyone will benefit from the VarioPrint i300 platform," he concludes.
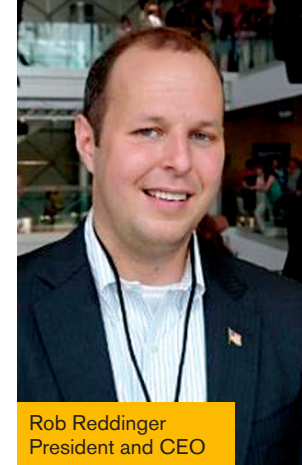
Rob Reddinger
President and CEO

AT A GLANCE
PINNACLE DATA SYSTEMS
Suwanee, Ga.

Markets Served: Government, insurance, utilities, financial services, trust, health care and collections

Capabilities: Digital printing, online document hosting, presentment and delivery, marketing, design

Ancillary Services: Disaster recovery services, project management, electronic payments

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Each calendar month features a different personalized image.

Sending out a personalized piece is an effective way to garner a recipient's attention, but what about a digitally printed piece featuring 12 distinctly personal images that will be viewed every day for an entire year? Bloomington, Ill.-based Progressive Impressions International (pii) figured out the perfect way to do just that. It initially created a personalized calendar as a self-promotional tool in 2007 to showcase its creative and complex variable data digital printing capabilities, but is now used as a profit center for customers to purchase and use as their own marketing pieces.

Nearly 50,000 personalized calendars are printed annually, and pii now relies on its VarioPrint i300 sheetfed production inkjet press to produce them more efficiently and cost-effectively.

The VarioPrint i300 has increased pii's variety of usable substrates to more than 50 different stocks, of which pii has already run 20. The VarioPrint i300 has also slashed makeready and maintenance times and increased volume from a workflow standpoint. Since installing the sheetfed inkjet press in July 2015, not only has the company seen running costs decrease approximately 30-40%, but the speed and quality of the VarioPrint i300 is unparalleled when compared to pii's sheetfed toner-based digital press.

"The speed is truly double on the VarioPrint i300 over toner printing because of machine uptime, consistency and reliability. We're now seeing three to four times the throughput," says Martin Koebel, production manager at pii.

One of the biggest selling points of this campaign is its variability. Rather than using templates available from variable software suppliers, pii uses a combination of stock imagery and original photography, complete with each recipient's name embedded naturally into the scenery.

"The more dynamic and impactful you make the imagery, the more the recipient is drawn into the printed piece … people really love to see their name in print," says Brian Phipps, creative director at pii.

By marrying production inkjet printing, creativity and sophisticated personalization in an inventive and striking way, pii is using the power of print to capture positive attention for itself and its clients year-round.

Now, pii's focus is to transition all of its remaining work that's a good fit for the VarioPrint i300.

"We think that eight to 10 million impressions per month is a very realistic, doable volume for us to be running on the machine," Koebel says.

MEDIA MATTERS

John Crumbaugh
Media Marketing Manager
Canon Solutions America

Evolution is happening at a steady pace in the inkjet paper marketplace. As new presses are developed and improvements in ink and software occur, paper mills are developing products to take advantage of these advancements.

Paper grades such as International Paper's Accent with Image Lok and Domtar's Lynx Jet allow customers to move work easily between offset, toner and inkjet technologies, while keeping many of the paper specifications constant. More general commercial print work is moving to inkjet presses and, due to that trend, new papers such as treated silks from Mondi and Crown Van Gelter and smooth surfaced treated inkjet papers like International Paper Accent Super Smooth have become available to meet the demand.

Commercial paper for inkjet has expanded not only in the web segment, but also in the sheetfed segment as well due to the VarioPrint i300. Gloss, matte and a wide variety of treated papers are now being brought to market to service sheetfed inkjet.

Innovation is not just limited to freesheet paper, but extends into PCW recycled papers from Rolland with the Envirojet product line and mechanical papers from Cascades, NorPac and Resolute Forest Products.

There has never been a more exciting time for production printing papers due to inkjet printing's impact on the industry. Inkjet has moved into new areas, sparking innovation across the paper industry. Never before have so many paper choices been available, accommodating more types of jobs across all segments of print.

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Press: Océ VarioPrint i300
Paper: International Paper 70# Accent® Opaque Super Smooth with ImageLok®
Technology

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