TOP-QUALITY PRINTING OF BOOKS IN COLOUR

⬦ Alphabeto, Greece

The Greek-based company Alphabeto needed a colour production system able to meet tough specifications. Top-quality print output and absolute reliability headed the criteria list in order to satisfy a demanding client base sourcing books in colour on media ranging from 80 to 180 gsm. In a challenging business climate a single-station solution was sought with the capacity to independently manage all media variations while at the same time delivering consistency, particularly in terms of print colour, together with robust production dependability.

Giving Shape to Ideas

Customer profile

Alphabeto is a commercial printer based in Greece, running a two-shift operation manned by teams of 30 employees each. Established in 1991, the company has developed a client base generating a monthly print volume of between 1,000,000 and 5,000,000 pages. The company offers an on-demand print service, not only for books, but also for booklets and posters. Of the overall monthly volume, between 100,000 and 300,000 pages are printed on Konica Minolta machines.

Konica Minolta solution

Discussions with Alphabeto managers quickly established that quality was of overriding importance. There was simply no room for compromise. The system configuration proposed by Konica Minolta, which was in fact ultimately ordered by the company, was the bizhub PRESS C8000 fitted with the PF-704 paper feeder, an FS-521 staple finisher plus the IC-307 to ensure full print control. The software package implemented on the station is the Konica Minolta Color Care 2 Suite including an ES-1000 photospectrometer to enable exact installation and calibration of the bizhub's colour systems according to quality targets. And to meet even the most challenging customer requests over and above actual printing, the system came complete with several offline finishing options. The printing of colour books is after all an extremely complex task requiring absolute precision at the pixel level. The bizhub PRESS C8000's system specifications are easily able to satisfy Alphabeto's quantity and paper specs backed by the ES-1000 for additional colour output/consistency, with the external IC-307 controller providing an extra level of quality assurance.

Previous installations

The solution configured by Konica Minolta was to a large extent driven by the customer's past unsatisfactory experience. The digital press set-up sourced from a competitor had been disappointing to the point of not even being finally installed, due to of several serious problems arising in connection with media management and colour consistency.

Keys for success

Assured print quality on customer-specific media:
– The Konica Minolta bizhub PRESS C8000 comes equipped with unique proprietary digital imaging technologies which, together with built-in capabilities, are able to guarantee outstanding and singularly consistent quality, in terms of both colour and output.

Precision rendition:
– The use of Simitri HD+ polymerised toner is another guarantor for the precise rendition of texts and lines, the ideal complement to advanced media handling flexibility, being able to dependably transport paper of up to 300 gsm from all standard trays and up to 350 gsm from the PFU trays.
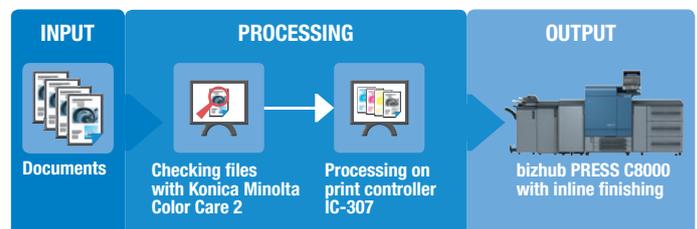
Speed:
– The Konica Minolta PRESS C8000 is a digital print station designed to deliver overall production speeds of up to 80 ppm (pages per minute) A4 colour and B/W – equating to a capacity of up to 500,000 pages per month on demand.

Service and support:
– The overall service package includes Konica Minolta's highly respected remote diagnostic system CS Remote Care, combined with a customised Customer Maintenance Support Programme to maximise system uptime.

Workflow

The workflow at Alphabeto can be subdivided into three separate steps: input, processing and output. The input comprises delivery by the customer of documents in the agreed data format. The first in-house step in the processing is to check the file(s) for content plausibility using the Konica Minolta Color Care 2 software package. After completion the data is forwarded to the IC-307 print controller ready for the actual print phase. The output starts with programming the bizhub PRESS C8000 for the specific print job including any inline finishing details. Clients are also appreciative of being offered a broad choice of offline finishing options and variations. The final products are nothing less than professionally finished books.

INPUT	PROCESSING		OUTPUT
Documents	Checking files with Konica Minolta Color Care 2	Processing on print controller IC-307	bizhub PRESS C8000 with inline finishing

Improvements and benefits

– Absolute dependability
– Print quality consistency
– Media management in low and large volumes
– Greater efficiency
– Cost reductions (manpower and materials)
– Speed

Customer's comment

"Our bizhub PRESS C8000 on our premises was the solution we were looking for. We needed a production system that would provide fast prints with reliability and colour consistency." says Theodoros Gavalas from Alphabeto. "We are very happy with this system, which provides us the above, while reducing printing costs at the same time."