



making work flow



### Case Study

Design 4 Print  
Commercial printing  
Production Print

UK commercial printer cuts costs, improves quality, transforms reliability with Ricoh digital print technology



Constant printer breakdowns, complex multi-part repairs and poor service were starting to impact Design 4 Print's ability to meet deadlines and maintain quality. With help from digital print specialist

ASL and Ricoh technology this UK commercial printer has seen a significant cut in costs, press downtime almost eliminated and quality improved. The company has even won back lost business.

### Executive summary

**Name:** Design 4 Print  
**Location:** Essex, UK  
**Size:** 13 staff  
**Activity:** Commercial printing

#### Challenges

- Deteriorating reliability and service of incumbent print devices
- Time and effort spent on equipment failures
- Anxiety and risk of missed deadlines and poor quality

#### Solution

- ASL and Ricoh Production Print

#### Benefits

- Significant cost savings on print resources and energy consumption
- Won back lost customer, opens up new business opportunities
- Virtually eliminates print equipment downtime
- Helps create a stress-free, simplified work environment

### Challenges

Design 4 Print has been established since 2004 producing a wide range of printed material including stationery, flyers, posters, business cards, full colour brochures and promotional items. The company also specialises in vehicle and fascia signage. It has a range of both litho and digital print facilities.

One of Design 4 Print's biggest customers is a UK holiday business with 30 caravan sites across South East and South West England. Design 4 Print had been a long-term customer of a leading digital print equipment manufacturer. But the company was starting to experience problems with the manufacturer's presses and its level of service. Although the equipment was five years old, Design 4 Print had problems throughout the period, such as constant breakdowns and the high volume of parts needed for maintenance. At one point, the manufacturer had even given a refund.

Rod Hall, Managing Director of Design 4 Print, says, "We used to have a back office let out to another business and they were constantly complaining about the parts and boxes everywhere for the printers. Almost every month we were sending back a pallet load of used parts."

Three months prior to end of contract, Design 4 Print brought in ASL, a digital print specialist and Ricoh business partner, to help find an alternative solution. Design 4 Print looked at a range of digital printers including new models from its incumbent manufacturer. But the company was concerned it would get the same problems.

Design 4 Print was impressed with the ASL sales approach which involved offering different manufacturers' products and honest, impartial advice, so that Design 4 Print could make an informed decision about best fit for

the business. The company decided to replace its existing digital print equipment with Ricoh technology.

### Solution

The ASL and Ricoh Production Print Solution deployed at Design 4 Print included consultancy and advice, installation of two Ricoh digital colour presses, training and an ongoing support service. This service includes remote device monitoring so that potential problems can be spotted in advance and dealt with by ASL and Ricoh often before the customer is even aware of an issue.

Design 4 Print chose Ricoh because of its colour consistency, industrial strength compared to other manufactures, and cost-effective, competitive pricing. The Ricoh technology had also been recommended to Design 4 Print by another printer.

Hall says, "Service and break-downs with our existing equipment were becoming horrendous. But I didn't think equipment from another manufacturer would be any different. I spoke to one printer who said their Ricoh press never breaks down and, to be honest, I didn't believe him. But his experience drove us towards Ricoh. Since we've had Ricoh technology it has stopped once in five months for a minor issue and we've only needed one new part."

### Benefits

The ASL and Ricoh solution has enabled Design 4 Print to improve the quality of its digital print products, reduce costs and almost eliminate device downtime. Hall says, "I used to come into the workshop and switch on the printers thinking to myself, please start! With the Ricoh presses they warm up in under 10 mins and are ready to go without any problems."

Design 4 Print has also seen significant cost savings. Leasing and click rate costs are much less than the previous printers and the business has seen a significant cut in energy costs because the Ricoh presses consume less power. Before, during busy periods, Design 4 Print was spending as much as £1000 on energy a month.

Hall says, "When we ran a multi-colour job on an old device we had to stop, clean the press, and remove marked stock every time we changed colour. One of the first jobs we ran on the Ricoh press was similar and it handled it perfectly without any interruptions. This kind of quality and reliability, along with money saved on the lease, click charges, less power use, less stock waste and less down time is a significant business improvement. Sometimes when you replace a press there are things the new kit can't do. But with Ricoh, there's not been one job where I've felt I wish we had our old devices."

continued overleaf



## Case Study Design 4 Print

In the past, Design 4 Print's policy was to have two digital presses in case one fails. But as Hall says, "We purchased two Ricoh presses because I didn't want to run the risk of breakdown and not having a backup. But, to be honest, I needn't have bothered, the Ricoh equipment is so reliable."

In fact, Design 4 Print has found the two Ricoh presses complement each other. Features like colour matching and registration are so accurate that the company can run the same job across both devices. The quality of output is so good that customers cannot spot the difference. Using both devices at the same time also speeds up production and helps Design 4 Print meet tight deadlines.

The ASL and Ricoh solution is also helping win back and develop new business. Design 4 Print had lost a customer because the old devices could not meet the customer's requirements. Design 4 Print got back in touch with the customer, told them about the capabilities of the new Ricoh presses and is now working with the same customer again. Some of the innovative features of the Ricoh technology are enabling Design 4 Print to produce new products. For example, it has produced some high-quality, striking menus for a restaurant using the Ricoh press'

ability to print white ink on black paper. The old devices could not handle this, because they could not recognise black colour stock.

Another important benefit of the Ricoh technology is its impact on people and the workplace. Reliability has meant less downtime which reduces anxiety and stress about getting jobs done on time and to high standard. Also, the simplicity and the need for fewer parts has made print room operations and maintenance less complex.

"I am not quite sure how we coped before the ASL and Ricoh solution. If we had a same-day job on Friday, I would worry we wouldn't do it on time; we'd even contemplate outsourcing to another printer. I always had that niggling doubt the printer was going to break down – we don't get that now. The reliability of the Ricoh technology is excellent, and the quality is just superb," says Hall.

### Ricoh Solution/Products

- Ricoh Pro C9200 Series digital colour press
- Ricoh Pro C7200sx digital colour press

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