



CASE STUDY

A PEDIGREE OF VERSATILITY AND PRODUCTIVITY IN COMMERCIAL PRINTING

With Support from Canon, Color Ink Leverages Its Lineage of Innovation with the Texas LT/X2 UV Flatbed Printer from DigiTech

About:

For more than four decades, Color Ink, a family-owned and operated experiential communications company based in Sussex, Wisconsin, has built a reputation for delivering cutting-edge, end-to-end marketing solutions. Specializing in packaging, signage/POP displays, influencer kits, and creative design, Color Ink caters to a broad base of nationwide and local customers with a steadfast commitment to modernization, accuracy, and creative expression. Operating a complete pre-press department, a sheet-fed press room, a full bindery, mailing fulfillment operations, and a creative studio, Color Ink offers comprehensive support to help clientele efficiently meet their goals.

Color Ink by the Numbers

Founded in **1984**

Operates **2 Spacious Buildings**

105,000 Square Feet
of Space

More than **120 Employees**

Powered by **1 Texas LT/X2 UV Flatbed Printer**

More than a Mom and Pop Shop

Color Ink's course to success has been nothing short of a family affair.

From humble beginnings in 1984 when **Jim Messiner** leveraged his creative expertise to start the company to its evolution into a commercial printer, initially focused on booklets, brochures, and marketing collateral, Color Ink has remained committed to optimizing their customers' investments and providing the best experience possible.

Now under the leadership of Jim's son, President **Todd Meissner**, and grandson, **Austin Meissner**, Color Ink has expanded its services to include retail signage, packaging, and wide-format digital printing, working with brands in fashion retail, high-end beverages, and more.

Austin, who serves as vice president of operations, oversees a myriad of production elements, managing a team of nine department managers. To ensure the team meets heightened client demands in this fast-paced, three-shift, 24/7 environment while also promoting both quality and innovation, the right technology and support is required.

Tapping into New Technology

Faced with an ageing flatbed inkjet press nearing the end of its life, Color Ink sought a modern, efficient wide-format replacement to help maintain its competitive edge and continue delivering high-quality and high-volume results. Adding to the wide-format fleet was crucial, especially given the needs of its structural design team and its inherent focus on producing eye-catching POP displays and converting flat substrate cardboard into vibrant, dimensional presentations.

"WE'VE MADE A LOT OF INVESTMENT IN WIDE FORMAT. THE TEXAS LT/X2 WAS A REALLY INTRIGUING PRODUCT. WE WERE FAMILIAR WITH DIGITECH'S PRODUCT OFFERINGS FOR A HANDFUL OF YEARS, AND WE WERE THRILLED TO HEAR THE ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP AND ALLIANCE FORMED WITH CANON TO HAVE THAT STRONG CORPORATE BACKING." – *Austin Meissner, VP of Operations, Color Ink*

Color Ink's commitment to innovation led them to the Canon team. At the PRINTING United tradeshow in Atlanta, Georgia, in 2023, they witnessed the Texas LT/X2 flatbed printer in action. Experiencing efficiency and quality firsthand, Color Ink made the commitment to invest in the printer to help handle sizeable projects on a vast array of rigid and corrugated media.

“THE TEXAS HIT A REALLY NICE SWEET SPOT AS A MID-RANGE DEVICE. THERE ARE FASTER PRESSES OUT THERE, BUT WHEN YOU LOOK AT THE BOARDS PER HOUR AND PRODUCTIVITY FOR THE PRICE POINT OF THE TEXAS, IT JUST MADE A LOT OF SENSE. IT’S A VERSATILE OUTFITTED MACHINE COMING WITH WHITE INK AS AN AVAILABLE OFFERING, WHICH WE OPTED TO GO WITH.” – Austin Meissner



In February of 2024, the Canon team delivered a seamless installation of the Texas, helping Color Ink to quickly integrate the new printer into their operations. Austin praised the technical support and service teams for providing minimal downtime and effective troubleshooting, enabling more efficient job scheduling and reducing the load on other devices.

“HAVING THE TEXAS, WHICH HAS PRODUCED JUST AS GOOD IF NOT BETTER QUALITY THAN OUR OTHER TWO PRESSES, IT GIVES ME A LOT MORE SCHEDULING FLEXIBILITY...BECAUSE I KNOW THE TEXAS AND CANON ARE GOING TO PRODUCE REALLY HIGH-QUALITY WORK THAT IS GOING TO BE MORE THAN ACCEPTABLE FOR OUR CLIENTS.”
– Austin Meissner

Texas-sized Results

The Texas LT/X2 has made a large imprint on Color Ink’s operations, with its highly productive, stationary flatbed that is capable of more than 3,000 ft²/hour (greater than 60 boards/hour). Its spacious five feet by ten feet image area accommodates substrates up to six inches thick, producing excellent output with meticulous detail and vivid color.

“THE TEXAS IS EASILY—AND THIS IS PROBABLY CONSERVATIVE—TWICE AS FAST (AS OUR PREVIOUS PRINTER). A JOB THAT WAS 40 SHEETS THAT TAKES SAY AN HOUR ON THE TEXAS WOULD HAVE TAKEN TWO HOURS. SO, IF YOU EXTRAPOLATE THAT OVER ALL THE IMPRESSIONS, YOU CAN PUT SOME NUMBERS BEHIND THAT AND MAKE ASSUMPTIONS ON WHAT AN HOURLY RATE IS FOR AN OPERATOR.” – Austin Meissner

According to Austin, the Texas printer has reduced ink consumption by 30 percent compared to their previous printer. Austin attributes this to a combination of significantly lower waste ink from head purges and a higher ink yield, resulting in less ink being used per square foot.

Additionally, the streamlined workflow has been enhanced by the printer’s registration pin system for accurate board loading and a two-zone vacuum table that holds media firmly in place. The reversable airflow system allows for easy board removal, and the auto unloader feature enables operators to focus strictly on loading sheets, helping to further enhance productivity. Austin said this efficiency of the auto unloader has saved operators approximately 15 seconds between sheets without the need to stack printed sheets manually. Over an eight-hour shift, this can culminate in roughly up to 80 minutes of productivity gains.

Quality and Flexibility Redefined

With the Texas LT/X2 maintaining high standards even at faster speeds, efficiency and quality have been a hallmark for Color Ink. The machine's TruFire Precision Print System helps to ensure dot placement accuracy, reliability, and productivity.

"THE OTHER DEVICES THAT ARE OUT THERE THAT ARE IN THAT COMPETING SPACE TO THE TEXAS TOUT A SIMILAR NUMBER OF BOARDS PER HOUR AND THAT'S FINE. MAYBE RUNNING AT TOP SPEED AND YOUR LOWEST QUALITY MODE, YOU CAN GET THE SAME NUMBER OF BOARDS AND THAT'S GREAT. BUT IT'S NOT GREAT IF YOU CAN'T SELL IT, RIGHT? IF THE QUALITY IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE CUSTOMERS TO ACCEPT IT, IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER HOW MANY BOARDS AN HOUR YOU CAN PUT THROUGH. WHAT I NOTICED ABOUT THE TEXAS IS THAT IN THE STANDARD MODE OR ITS SPEED MODE, IT'S PROBABLY PRODUCING MORE SELLABLE SHEETS THAN SOME OF THE OTHER COMPETING DEVICES." – Austin Meissner

This balance has had a significant impact on Color Ink's operators, supporting their ability to satisfy client requests with a minimal learning curve. The device's marginal downtime and quick startup times, especially during shift transitions, have set the team up for continuous success. Austin said daily maintenance has decreased to just 10 minutes per day compared to their previous device that required one to two hours of maintenance each day, which has supported a seamless experience.

A Future Focused on Growth

Color Ink's utilization of the Texas LT/X2 has exemplified their legacy of innovation and commitment to quality, empowering the team to enhance production capabilities, meet evolving client needs, and maintain a leading position in the commercial print industry.

As Color Ink continues its customer-first journey, advanced technology will help them expand into new markets and enhance both capacity and capability. Upcoming technologies, including an even more efficient version of the Texas printer and the Canon varioPRESS iV7 B2 inkjet production device, has Austin excited for the possibilities of Color Ink's future. With Canon and the transformative power of the Texas LT/X2 now part of the family, Color Ink is poised to continue its heritage of excellence, innovation, and growth for years to come.

As of January 1, 2025, Canon Solutions America, Inc. merged into its parent company, Canon U.S.A., Inc. The relationship described in this case study initiated with Canon Solutions America and continues with Canon U.S.A.



To learn more about the capabilities of the Texas LT/X2 printer, call or visit

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12/25-0562-11594

0562-11594 12/27/24