

# CONNECTED

VISUAL MEDIA ALLIANCE

WINTER 2023



## Advancements in Print Technology

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# Print **BIG** with our UGraphics Team!

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## Let's make your big print dreams a reality!

Watch as wide-format graphics expert, Glenn Cummins, walks you through the HP Latex 800W and the HP Latex Plus Cutter All-in-one solution. Glenn describes the benefits of the devices, how to operate, and what to watch out for when purchasing these units for your organization.



*Scan the QR Code to watch the complete demonstration video!*



**Reach out today!** Mention this ad and receive a complimentary **Technology Assessment!**

Glenn Cummins | 916.751.2983  
gcummins@ubeo.com





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Visual Media Alliance is non-profit trade association serving Northern California printers, packaging, label makers, and design agency and other small business owners. By providing events, education, discounts, advocacy, industry promotion and insurance programs, we help our member firms become more successful and profitable.

## ON THE COVER

Tabrez Rajani, President & Chief Executive Officer at MarkSYS, a VMA member located in Rocklin, CA, uses the Canon varioPRINT iX to operate more efficiently.

# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Valued Members,

As we start 2023, it's good to see that most VMA members bounced back nicely in 2022, especially those in the political printing arena. Even though paper shortages have mostly abated, we may see economic headwinds next year, especially if the layoffs in the tech sector start to migrate into the rest of the economy. Good strategic planning now on all fronts, from staffing to technology, can significantly impact the year's results.

This issue of *Connected* recognizes our vendors and suppliers and the technological advances they bring to help make our success possible. Whether consumables, like paper and ink, or imaging and finishing equipment or software, everything we do relies on our vendor community. Their products and services help us with day-to-day operations, make our work more efficient, differentiate our businesses, and move our industry forward with improved technologies.

From printing workflow automation that moves jobs through the shop faster to new technologies like finishing equipment, inkjet, and wide format printers, our suppliers are always thinking about improving our businesses, broadening our capabilities, and making us stand apart.

So, the next time a vendor rep is "checking in" with you, take a little extra time to learn about the next greatest thing they are bringing to market. And better yet, share your needs and ideas with them so they can invent, create, and offer more improvements. Think of your vendor companies and reps as your partners and solution providers who can bring ideas to help your business prosper. Build and enjoy these relationships as they are critical inputs to your success.

At VMA, we are grateful for the suppliers that help support us both financially and in spirit and recognize them as crucial components of our industry's strength.

Please reach out to me anytime at [ian@vma.bz](mailto:ian@vma.bz).

All the best for a prosperous 2023!



Sincerely,

Ian Flynn  
VMA President

*Every once in a while, a new technology, an old problem, and a big idea turn into an innovation.*

– Dean Kamen, American Engineer, Inventor, and Business Man

## VMA PRINTER TECHNOLOGIES SUITE

Innovation and advancement is at the forefront of everything, and it's no different for printing. Technology allows you, as a printer, packager, or label maker, to provide the services and products to your customers. For agency owners, knowing what the machines can do can help you get extra creative!

Having the latest tech can help define and differentiate your business. Plus, we know for many of you, the latest and coolest tech is the candy.

Below are some print vendors with special perks for VMA members.

### Kodak-Brand Special Rebates



Whether you're looking to strengthen your offset solutions or build out a digital offering, Kodak has equipment that can meet your print shop's needs. With VMA's exclusive Kodak-brand

rebate program, VMA members can save money while optimizing printing operations with industry-leading solutions.

The rebate program includes the following products:

- Kodak Offset Platesetter Solutions: KODAK TRENDSETTER, KODAK ACHIEVE, and KODAK MAGNUS (4-up, 8-up, VLF)
- KODAK PRINERGY On-Demand Software Solutions
- KODAK NEXFINITY Digital Presses
- KODAK PROSPER Inkjet Presses
- Consumables: Proprietary water-based inks
- Kodak Service and Support

Please contact Ian Flynn for more information at [ian@vma.bz](mailto:ian@vma.bz).

### Discount on Apple-Brand Products

This is the discount everyone dreams about. VMA members receive preferred pricing on the latest Apple and third-party products and accessories.



Program Benefits:

- Complimentary shipping on all orders over \$50
- A complete online catalog, featuring the latest Apple products and compatible third-party products
- Quick and easy ordering. Payment can be made with any combination of credit card, or Apple Gift Card
- Business Financing
- Online custom product configuration
- Members receive a 2% discount on SIM free iPhone

Check out VMA's Apple Store at <http://bit.ly/3Jbnfo6> and start saving today.

For questions, contact [shannon@vma.bz](mailto:shannon@vma.bz) or 415-710-0568.

### PressWise - Workflow Automation & More



PressWise by SmartSoft provides commercial printers and other visual media businesses with

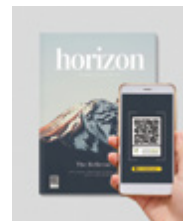
solutions for address correction, postal discounts, and print workflow automation.

Their cloud-based solutions include:

- **PressWise** – End-to-end MIS and Workflow solution.
- **AccuMail** – Postal address correction software, the all-in-one address quality, and postal presorting solution.
- **AccuMail Verify API** – Point of entry address verification and correction API. Available in REST or SOAP.
- **SmartAddresser 5** – Real-time address validation software.
- **MailSpotter** – Postal system mail tracking software.

VMA has negotiated a \$1,500 credit against startup costs and your first two months of service free of charge. See more at [smartsoftusa.com](http://smartsoftusa.com) or contact [shannon@vma.bz](mailto:shannon@vma.bz).

### PrintReleaf Uses Technology for Print Sustainability



Sustainability is a great brand differentiator, and now there's easy tech to make your print jobs environmentally-friendly.

VMA has partnered with PrintReleaf to make it easier to help you aid your clients in achieving their sustainability goals and stand out in their customers' eyes. PrintReleaf's platform automatically converts your paper footprint into actual trees. As you print, they actively replant trees in forests that need it most around the world. You can also choose carbon offsets.

With 57% of consumers saying they are willing to change their purchasing behavior "to help reduce negative environmental impact,"<sup>1</sup> there's no better time to sign up with PrintReleaf. Plus, VMA members get 25% off published rates! Contact [shannon@vma.bz](mailto:shannon@vma.bz) for more information. [printreleaf.com](http://printreleaf.com)

1. 2020 study by the National Retail Federation and IBM.

## NEW VMA DISCOUNT PROGRAMS

View all of our discounts programs at [main.vma.bz/discounts](https://main.vma.bz/discounts).

### Save Big on Shipping with UPS

Technically not a new discount, but an even better rate – VMA members can now save up to 50% with UPS on international, air, and ground shipping!



Member-Only Saving Include:

- 50% off Domestic Next Day / Deferred
- 30% off Ground Commercial / Residential
- Up to 50% off International Imports/Exports

Plus, get free UPS Smart Pickup Service, and UPS' guarantee that it will arrive on time.

Contact [shannon@vma.bz](mailto:shannon@vma.bz) for more information.

### Working Advantage Discount Program



Your staff's work-life balance and general well-being are as important as the work they contribute. That's why we're excited to offer a new Working Advantage Discount Program for you and your employees.

This program offers exclusive and convenient savings on

electronics, appliances, hotels, rental cards, gift cards, flowers, and much more.

It's cost-free and easy to enroll. Just visit [workingadvantage.com](https://workingadvantage.com) and use the code **VMABZPERKS** to begin receiving discounts.

For questions, contact [shannon@vma.bz](mailto:shannon@vma.bz).

## VMA UPCOMING EVENTS

View all upcoming events at [main.vma.bz/networking-events](https://main.vma.bz/networking-events).



### February 2023 – Ask the Professor “2023 Print Trends & Insights” Collective Conversations

Join us for our upcoming virtual Collective Conversations event on February 16th on “2023 Print Trends & Insights. Get trends, outlooks, & actionable takeaways with special guest Dr. Ralph Williams, Associate Professor of Management at Middle Tennessee State University.

His data and information come from his Print Industry Performance & Insights (PIPI) surveys conducted nationally with print businesses like yours. This is your opportunity to get key insights and recommendations for print business success in the coming year. Register here: <https://bit.ly/3WqGDAd>



Dr. Ralph Williams

## VMA PAST EVENTS

View photos of past events at [main.vma.bz/photos](https://main.vma.bz/photos).



### Dec 2022 - ConnectUp at Trade Lithography in Antioch

Here are photos from our festive and fun ConnectUp event this past December at Trade Litho in Antioch! Over 30 folks came and enjoyed the food, music, networking, and behind-the-scenes preview of cool printing and finish techniques and equipment at Trade Litho's space.





# MEMBER NEWS

## International Contact is Now Part of the Language Network



In 1982, Carla Itzokowich and her mother started International Contact as a production service because she wanted to have some money in case her father couldn't send money from Mexico. Very soon, customers started asking for commercials in Spanish.

Since its conception, International Contact has grown to provide real natural translation services, including document translation, website localization, print production, and more, to city, county, and federal governments, non-profits, businesses, and marketing agencies in over 100 languages from Afrikaans to Zulu and everything in-between. Its roster of clients includes the City of Oakland, the County of Alameda, and the State of California.

Forty years later, International Contact has been acquired by the Language Network, a family of language companies with over 6,000 happy clients, 4,000 expert linguists, and 200+ languages and dialects. Congratulations Carla!

[Intlcontact.com](http://Intlcontact.com) | [languagenetworkusa.com](http://languagenetworkusa.com)

## TGS Elevate Produces Multi-State Marketing Initiative

TGS Elevate, an award-winning firm offering end-to-end solutions for retail marketing, was hired by Bank of the West to produce a multi-state marketing initiative to draw in the next generation of consumers.



TGS' solution was designed to increase traffic, increase time spent within the branch, contribute to an increased customer experience, and provide a place that people would want to talk about. The spaces, messaging, colors, layout flow, and available features were created to align with daily living to engage the consumer organically.

In addition to the new design, they ensured the installation of the look during the holiday season in 147 locations in record time! [tgselevate.com](http://tgselevate.com)

## WELCOME NEW MEMBER



### PrisMetal

PrisMetal offers printed metal artwork and signage. They are a full-service design studio specializing in custom printing on metal. Their unique process combines precision laser cutting, artistic metal grinds for maximum light reflectivity, vibrant colors, deep embossing, and realistic textures to create inspiring pieces of art that truly come to life in your hands and on customers' walls.

Their in-house manufacturing team is comprised of artists and craftsmen dedicated to quality, efficiency, innovation, and constant improvement. The artistic eye for design and quality throughout the company sets them apart.

Ashley Moyer  
[www.prismetal.com](http://www.prismetal.com)  
(916) 693-7066

## MCC Acquires Flexcoat Label Operations



Multi-Color Corporation (MCC), one of the largest label companies in the world, just signed an agreement to acquire Flexcoat, a label and lamination operation in Brazil.

The deal gives MCC a physical footprint in Brazil and the company plans to invest further in expanding product offerings in Brazil. The acquisition will give Flexcoat's customers access to expanded product offerings and a comprehensive range of the latest label technologies. [flexcoat.com.br](http://flexcoat.com.br) | [mcclabel.com](http://mcclabel.com)

## Canon Wins Four Pinnacle Awards

Canon was awarded four awards for the quality of its large-format graphic technology! This includes three Pinnacle Product Awards for its Colorado 1630 UVgel roll-to-roll printer and its Arizona 2380 GTF and XTF flatbed printers, as well as a Pinnacle InterTech Award for its Canon FLXfinish+ technology.



Each of the 160+ entries in more than 58 categories, spanning analog, digital, output, and non-output technologies, was reviewed by an independent panel of over a dozen judges made up of distinguished decision-makers within the printing industry. [canon-europe.com](http://canon-europe.com)

## New Color Management Solution by ESKO & GMG Partnership



Esco-Graphics BV (Esco) and GMG GmbH & Co. KG (GMG) have partnered to deliver a new connection between GMG's profiling and color prediction solution, GMG OpenColor, and Esco's native prepress editing software, ArtPro+.

The collaboration addresses the demand for highly automated and globally connected color management solutions creating a smoother and more efficient color conversion process for packaging and label printers, trade shops, and premedia houses.

The solution enhances the connectivity and data exchange between the two class-leading solutions and ensures uninterrupted file processing and color conversion without losing mission-critical metadata between systems — allowing both solutions to operate at their best. [esko.com](http://esko.com) | [gmgcolor.com](http://gmgcolor.com)

## Moquin Prints Packaging that Makes Flossing Fun

Cocofloss is a brand of dental floss that is fun enough to encourage diligent and proper dental care. It leverages vibrant packaging to make the flavors stand out. As a sustainable-focused brand, they partnered with Moquin and Monadnock to make their packaging both stunning and eco-friendly.



The packaging is FSC-certified and carbon neutral and is produced with 100% e-Green certified windpower from Monadnock Paper Mills. Moquin uses Algae-Ink, an eco-friendly alternative to traditional black ink using fossil-fuel-derived substances, and a 100% carbon-neutral Heidelberg 7 Color press. [mpm.com](http://mpm.com) | [moquinpress.com](http://moquinpress.com) | [cocofloss.com](http://cocofloss.com)

# Protect Your Business From Cyber Attack

Cyber attacks are growing in both frequency and severity, particularly against small businesses.

- Industry experts estimate that cybersecurity incidents will cost businesses over \$5 trillion within the next five years alone.<sup>1</sup>
- The average cost of a cyber attack has exploded from \$34,000 to just under \$200,000 per single incident.<sup>2</sup>
- The average downtime a company experiences after a ransomware attack is 21 days.<sup>2</sup>

1 Hiscox's 2019 Cyber Readiness Report. 2 Cowbell Cyber. 3 Amount varies based on specifics

The good news is using artificial intelligence can help balance exposure with appropriate coverage.<sup>2</sup>

VMA Insurance Services has partnered with Cowbell Insurance, an insurer of cyber risk that uses just this type of AI to protect small businesses!

**Get peace of mind from cyber risk for as low as \$400/year for \$250,000 worth of coverage.<sup>3</sup>**

Additionally, should a situation arise, cyber insurance can help your business recover quickly by bringing expert services to help you after a cyber attack.



Contact Shannon at 415-710-0568 or [shannon@vma.bz](mailto:shannon@vma.bz) for more information to protect your business.



**COWBELL™**  
CYBER



# UBEO Helps Printers Expand their Horizons (AND THEIR PROFITS)

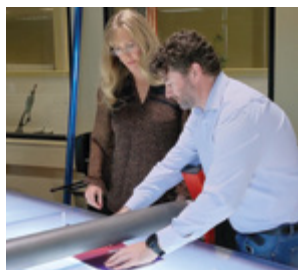
BY REVA HARRIS

As the industry undergoes a seismic shift, technology is enabling printers to create new opportunities for themselves. Glenn Cummins believes that some of the most exciting new opportunities are in the wide format printing space. As the Director of Wide Format Graphics at UBEO, he's seen the technology grow more affordable and easier to use — just what printers need to make the shift.

He says that due to the great demand, "You're typically looking at a 700% ROI in wide format printing." Even in the toughest days of the pandemic, Cummins says that many of his customers were able to grow their businesses. Demand was high for sign shops to print floor and window displays. Wallpaper manufacturers also saw increased business from hotels that wanted to remodel while business was slow.

## Education eases the transition

Considering the benefits of wide format, Cummins was asked if there are any barriers to entry to hurdles in achieving that fantastic ROI. He says that, "It's a big step for a lot of people, which is why we focus on education." UBEO's approach is all about the customer experience. We slow down the whole process from start to finish. When a customer buys a printer,



Glenn Cummins provides educational training at facility.

UBEO stages and tests the unit at their facility first. Then, we bring in the customer for training. After delivery, the customer receives two additional days of training."

For the UBEO team, delivering the equipment and onboarding a new customer quickly is less important than knowing that the customer is comfortable with their new purchase. Everyone, from the leadership team to frontline employees, is guided by a core belief: "Customer first, employees second. When you take care of those two things, the company will be successful."

## With current technology, the timing is perfect

Aside from the amazing ROI, Cummins says it's a great time to get into wide format printing because the technology has become easier to use. He regularly recommends the HP L3X5 to printers who are just getting into wide format. "One thing HP does really well, is they don't penalize the person entering the business with lower image quality." Whether you're buying the entry-level L3X5 or the higher end HP Latex 800, the machines deliver the exact same image quality.

One of the most exciting new technologies Cummins has seen in the last year is the budget-friendly Canon Texas UV flatbed printer. "It can automatically go from print to flatbed cutting. This is a completely hands-off system." He points out that it's an innovation that would normally be out of reach for the average small- or medium-sized print shop.



## Eco-friendly tech constantly evolves

Cummins is also excited about the increased sustainability of wide format printing technology, like what you see with the HP Latex series. Latex ink was a major innovation ten years ago, since it reduced waste and made printing less toxic for workers. Since then, “Every time HP comes up with a new generation, they come up with a new way of manufacturing the ink or delivering the ink to the customer so that you can cut down on waste going to the landfill.”

Now, with the Latex 700 and 800 series, Cummins says that ink packaging is completely recyclable: “It comes in a cardboard box with a plastic inseam and when you’re done with it, you

can literally take the plastic inseam out of the box, and put it into plastic recycling, and take the cardboard and put it into cardboard recycling.”

Cummins’ customers are using these innovations to deliver on-demand services and reduce their environmental footprint. For example, with printing systems that allow you to print directly to cardboard, his customers can now create custom displays easier than ever. Demand for cardboard displays is on the rise, as retailers look for ways to enhance the in-store experience. And as Cummins points out, “What’s great about it is it’s cardboard, so it can go straight into compost.”

## Explore new frontiers with confidence

The innovations aren’t just in the equipment and materials. Cummins says printers should also keep up with the latest RIP software, especially Onyx 22. “It’s easy to use, provides high-quality graphics, and best of all, helps printers track ROI. When you use all the features of the suite you can get a true cost. It will tell you if a job failed to print two times before you output it correctly the third time and it’ll factor that into your costs on that project.”



ONYX web page for Printing Applications.

“ It’s easy to use, provides high-quality graphics, and best of all, helps printers track ROI.”

– Glen Cummins on keeping up with the latest RIP software, Onyx 22



Glenn Cummins gives a walk-through of the HP Latex 800W and the HP Latex Plus Cutter All-in-one solution. Watch video at <https://youtu.be/M9VmsPmy-3c>.

With the increased ease, accessibility, and sustainability of wide-format printing, Cummins is eager to help more printers make the leap. For starters, it allows you to serve more of your customers’ needs. If a customer needs trade show graphics or building signage, you don’t have to send them elsewhere. Also, it’s good for a printer’s bottom line. “It’s just going to add a whole bunch more revenue to their business. Every time you talk about wide format [print jobs], you’re talking about a significant amount of money that the customer will spend with you. There are no small numbers in wide format printing.”

For more information on UBEO, visit [ubeo.com](http://ubeo.com) or contact Glenn Cummins, Director of Wide Format Graphics at [gcummins@ubeo.com](mailto:gcummins@ubeo.com).

# Corefact + HP: Pushing Print into the Future

BY REVA HARRIS

When discussing the future of print, you have to talk about customization. Personalized direct mail, flyers, gifts, keepsakes, and other materials are highly effective and in high demand. The challenge for printers is being able to customize at scale. To consistently deliver high-quality work and keep profits intact, you need to be able to automate, and automation is something that VMA Member, Corefact, does well.

Based in Hayward, Corefact operates a unique business model. The company provides marketing services and content, primarily for real estate firms, with highly customized print materials being a key component of its offerings. The production of these marketing materials is powered by Corefact's automation tools and backend processes.

For example, Corefact integrates with several Multiple Listing Services (MLS) around the country. Realtors can order customized materials (such as flyers featuring new listings in a neighborhood or "Just Sold" signs) via a one-step process through Corefact's website. "Something that would normally take hours to produce, we can fulfill within seconds or minutes," says Christopher Burnley, CEO of Corefact.

Making such a complex process easy for customers requires sophisticated workflows and reliable print technology. With HP hardware and software solutions as part of its technology toolkit, Corefact is able to scale its customization capabilities and generate significant revenue from print.

## Using technology is a differentiator

Corefact leverages technology to deliver more value to customers and boost the bottom line. Burnley says that technology is especially important because print is often viewed as a commodity: "The more technology we can integrate into it, the more efficiency we can bring, and the more value we can bring. We can also increase our margins a little bit."

Like many buyers across industries, Corefact's customers expect fast turnarounds, which the company prides itself on being able to deliver. Flyers ordered before noon are shipped the same day, and direct mail products are usually delivered to the post office the next day. "With the volume we produce, you have to invest quite a bit in the systems that make it all work. So that's also a big part of our technological advantage."

*“Something that would normally take hours to produce, we can fulfill within seconds or minutes.”*

— Chris Burnley



(Top right) Book printed for Jackson Suites by Corefact. (Right) HP Indigo 100k Digital Press. The world's most productive B2 digital solution (compared to alternative B2 digital commercial solutions as of November, 2019), with true digital non-stop print capabilities, at 6,000 sheets per hour.

## How HP helps make automation work

HP Indigo digital presses, which the company uses for the bulk of its work, is a key part of its automation ecosystem. As one of Silicon Valley's first startups, HP has a long history of pushing technological boundaries. And to help printers evolve into the future, it also provides a more holistic approach to support and innovation.

Ron Sarne, who leads the Business Development team for HP's Americas region, points out that, "Turn times are getting faster, and high quality isn't just a goal, it's a requirement. So, we also look at how we support everything else like all the other automation features, the market knowledge, and the personal support to help grow their business."

Burnley says that one of HP's best innovations is in its service model. According to Burnley, one of the reasons Corefact prefers HP because "The technology is amazing, but it's the service model innovation that really stands out." HP provides extensive training so operators can service their own machines. "It keeps our uptime up, which is very important to us. If a press goes down at two in the morning, somebody can go out and fix it, and then we're back up and running."

In terms of software, Burnley says HP's SmartStream RIP system handles variable data well, processes projects quickly, and aligns well with its broader set of automation tools. "We have our own e-commerce site and upwards of 400 web portals. The process of taking the order online and getting it to the press – we've tried to take out every human step of that process as possible. And that's a big operational efficiency for us."

## Being ready for what's next

According to Sarne, Corefact represents "The company of the future that doesn't lead with graphic arts or print. They have a particular market and solve challenges, but if you walk into the back of their shop, it's highly print-centric."

Burnley says the secret to Corefact's success with its approach has been its ability to adapt: "As a printer and as a business, you need to build your organization to accept and almost want change. The agile printer is ready to take on the changing demands of the marketplace, and when that change comes in, and you're able to adapt, generally, your market share grows."

Sarne says HP is ready to adapt with its customers. To support the next wave in printing, they're prioritizing the needs of printers, businesses, and consumers. Solutions can range from sustainability to supporting multiple communication across multiple mediums. "Instead of fighting it and saying, 'It's either print vs. digital,' it's all communication. How do we all work together and show value and give back? With Corefact, we continue to work with them and not just sell presses, but also to forward the next market evolution."

Learn more at [corefact.com](https://corefact.com) and [hp.com](https://hp.com). Contact Chris Burnley, CEO of Corefact, at [burnley@corefact.com](mailto:burnley@corefact.com) and Ron Sarne, Team Lead, Business Development & Strategic Consulting of HP, at [ron.sarne@hp.com](mailto:ron.sarne@hp.com).



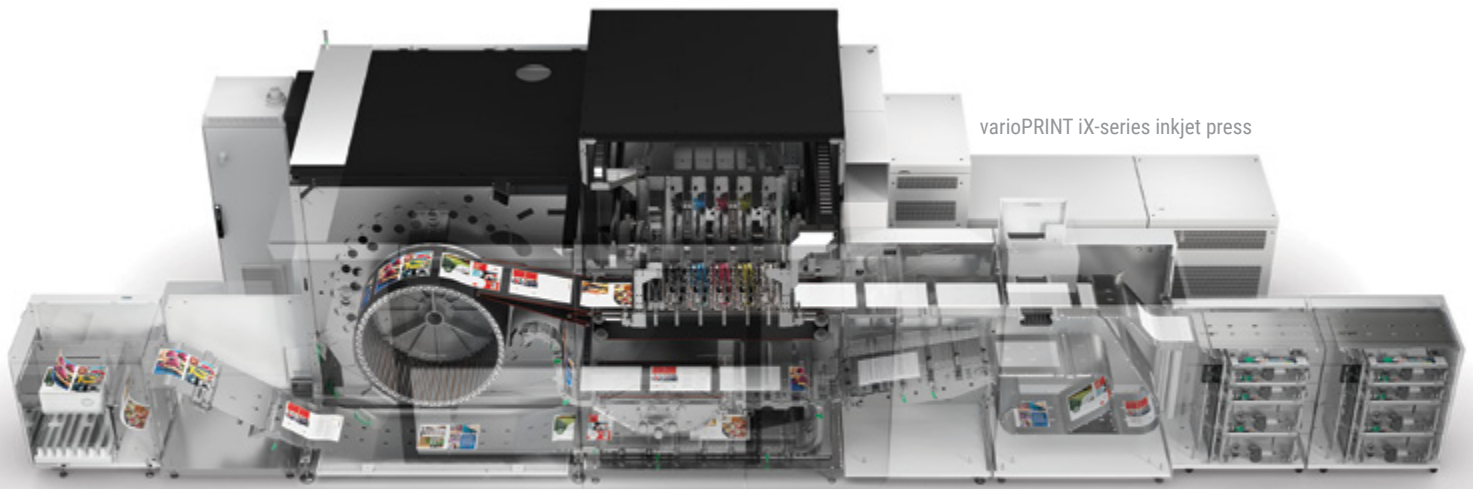
(Above) Sheets of printed advertisements. (Right) Chris Burnley standing in front of the HP Indigo 100k Digital Press.



*“ Instead of fighting it and saying, ‘It's either print vs. digital,’ it's all communication. How do we all work together and show value and give back?”*

– Ron Sarne





# How Canon Provides the Right Innovation at the Right Time

BY REVA HARRIS

Print has a reputation for being an old-school industry. But when you look at the latest print technology, it's anything but traditional. As one of the most well-known brands in print, Canon Solutions America (through its acquisition of Dutch printer manufacturer Océ) has a long legacy of pushing the boundaries of production print technology. Since 2000, Senior Account Executive Rusty Davis has had a front-row seat to see how that innovation is helping printers adapt to rapidly changing times. As the company's offerings have evolved, its technology has been just what printers need to navigate the 21st century.

## A long history of innovation

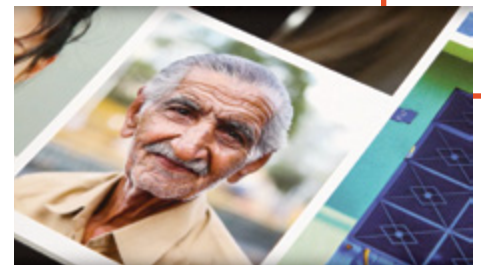
Before the acquisition, Océ had been a print innovator for decades. Océ introduced the now-ubiquitous green-button concept in 1979, and in 1995, it introduced its first digital printer, the Océ 3165, with Copy Press. Copy Press increased reliability, nearly eliminated paper jams, and significantly reduced ozone emissions. Another Océ innovation came in the form of its Gemini print technology in 2006, which simultaneously presses toner images onto both sides of the paper — creating the first and fastest digital perfecting press. Today, the 4th

generation 'Titan' line continues in this tradition, still as the world's fastest digital perfecting press.

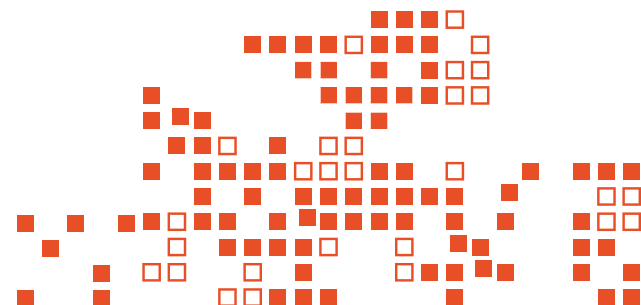
Canon has built upon those innovations with the Canon varioPRINT iX family of sheetfed inkjet products. And with the launch of the varioPRINT iX3200 in 2020, printers have even greater flexibility than before. The varioPRINT enables printers to expand the type of documents they can print on and allows them to shift between offset and digital. "If someone ordered 10,000 units of a brochure, and then called back and said they needed 300 of them right now, our iX customers can pivot that project back and forth between offset and digital," says Davis.

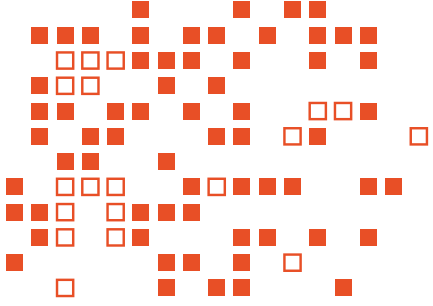
## Helping printers do more with less

With these innovations, Canon is able to offer printers greater efficiency and productivity. As the print industry faces an intense labor shortage, doing more with less has become a necessity. "Printers need to be able to do more with the same amount of time we all have, but with fewer bodies physically in the plant," Davis says; this is where Canon's Solutions America really shine.



High quality, UV coated applications.





**“Ask the question. Be curious. Ask why. We want to educate. When our customers are more informed, they make the right choices for themselves.”**

– Rusty Davis. Senior Account Executive at Canon Production Systems



Book iX Solution – Featuring the varioPRINT iX-series.



iX performance ink. Water-based inks with a proprietary formulation for excellent image quality and robustness on many different media types.



Co-developed 1200 dpi printheads optimized for use in iX-series and true 1200 dpi image processing.

For example, MarkSYS, a VMA member located in Rocklin, CA, uses the varioPRINT iX to operate more efficiently. The full-service printer's previous technology required intensive manual work to calibrate and correct color gamuts across devices. It was almost a full-time job, but with the iX, that time has been reduced to just a few minutes. The employee who spent most of the day ensuring brand color consistency has been freed up to work on other tasks. As an added benefit, the iX requires 25% less UV coating than MarkSYS' previous machine, reducing materials costs and waste.

### As demand evolves, so does the technology

The labor market isn't the only thing disrupting the print industry. Customer demands are rapidly evolving, especially in the wake of COVID-19. Print buyers are under pressure to increase personalization and stay relevant in a highly competitive attention economy. Davis points out, "People don't need 10,000 units of a brochure because that product will probably evolve before all 10,000 units are gone. They're wanting to do less volume, but they're making more orders of versions of the same product."

This is only exacerbating the resource constraints printers face. "Instead of one order of 1,000, our customers may get 1,000 orders, possibly of one. And that requires a lot more manual intervention on their side to get that one unit out the door."

Canon is helping printers address these challenges. In 2021, Acutrack, a book fulfillment provider in Livermore, CA, needed a solution both for the paper supply and shipping challenges that were limiting its ability to serve its clients. Bringing book printing in-house would typically require four or five employees to follow a multi-step process.

To allow for more efficient book printing, Canon bundled its varioPRINT iX with its automated workflow software Conveyance and a Bourg perfect binder into a product called the Book iX Solution. Now, this Book iX owner can print books on demand. Instead of requiring multiple workers to produce a book, "With the Book iX, all of that is handled with three touches by one operator," says Davis. Acutrack has evolved into a book printer without adding a significant burden to its staff.

### Making sustainability simple

Sustainability, whether in the form of reduced waste or the elimination of toxic chemicals, is a common thread in every Canon innovation. The company takes it a step further by offsetting the carbon output generated by its production presses in the first year of ownership. As part of the program, Canon has planted more than 2 million trees on behalf of its customers. According to Davis, "Every VMA member that has acquired Canon tech from Canon Solutions America, Production Printing Systems over the last 13 years has been a part of the program."

Participants receive a report outlining how many trees were planted on their behalf, and many continue the initiative on their own after the first year.



Marksys Holdings 2021 Report of Canon Solutions America Eco Start Program: Trees for the Future.

### To access innovation, simply ask

Many of Canon's innovations have come about by listening to the needs of printers and their customers. Whether you're interested in expanding your capabilities or using your resources more efficiently, Davis says that printers can empower themselves by using experts like him as a resource. "Ask the question. Be curious. Ask why. We want to educate. When our customers are more informed, they make the right choices for themselves."

Learn more at [pps.csa.canon.com](https://pps.csa.canon.com). Contact Rusty Davis, Senior Account Executive of Canon Solutions America-Production Print Systems, at [rudavis@csa.canon.com](mailto:rudavis@csa.canon.com).



## CHANGING CLIMATE BRINGS NEW RULES AND NEW IDEAS

LAURA AITKEN AND ERICA AITKEN RODS AND CONES

Reducing our carbon footprint by committing to eco-friendly printing strategies will change how we spend, become more efficient, and attract eco-conscious clients. And we will make a positive impact on our planet.

*The World Counts* says that paper totals 26% of waste in landfills. Paper usage has gone up 126% in the last 20 years. Using recycled paper and reducing paper waste are the first steps to explore. Dan Schlegel of Superior Lithographics, Los Angeles, tackles the problem by finding local mills that recycle their waste, printing larger runs, and ganging jobs. Despite some resistance to modifying projects to reduce waste, Dan says that waste management remains their focus.

Traditional inks are made from oil and often contain harmful chemicals called Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). Today, plant-based inks are standard in California, and while they are an important improvement, the pigment in these inks is still derived from fossil fuels and creates new issues around crops and crop cycles.

Jason Tempestini, Operations Manager of Greenerprinter, Point Richmond, explains that finding the best solution is not only a question of ink properties but also what goes into making

them, whether they will dry without curing, and if they can be sourced locally. He partners with EcoEnclose to perfect a black algae-based ink that will replace carbon black and vegetable inks. The pigments of algae ink are biodegradable and use water or plant-based carriers. It is the most renewable ink available today.

We spoke to Ross Newport of Community Printers in Santa Cruz. This employee-owned company is heavily committed to reducing its footprint. Their partnership with *Trees For The Future* resulted in 180,000 new trees worldwide. How this company has evolved is perhaps the most brilliant example of how a new and better direction can emerge when facing global and potentially devastating change. Known for their commitment to the environment, they are consulted before a project begins to discuss the components of a package and whether each piece is necessary and optimized. With these changes come new prosperity for them and a better future for us.

Laura Aitken is a writer and script developer. She is based in Los Angeles. Erica Aitken is president of Rods and Cones. The company offers color management and automation solutions. Laura and Erica are committed to helping change how we live and work. [Erica@rodsandcones.com](mailto:Erica@rodsandcones.com) or 831-325-1854



## IMPLEMENTING A PRINT MIS – GETTING YOUR STAFF ON BOARD

TONY TARPEY, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AT SMARTSOFT INC

You may invest in the best print management system in the world, but if your staff are resistant to change and refuse to use it, it just becomes a cost center with no positive impact on your business.

By following some clear steps, you can help guide your staff through the process of reevaluating the way jobs run through your shop and show them that a more efficient, better-informed print shop is the best way to succeed in a competitive environment.

Here are a few tips to make the process easier:

1. Define your vision of what you are trying to achieve for your business – explain why you want to change the way things are done.
2. Analyze your current processes at every step throughout your shop, identifying areas for improvement.
3. Create clear, measurable objectives that you want to see as a result. Look at Printing Industries of America Ratio studies for industry comparison data.
4. Appoint a project leader to drive the implementation. This is more of a business than a technology role, so make sure that person has a broad understanding of your entire operation and is a leader since they'll need to convince others that this is good for everyone.

5. Depending on your shop size, you may want to assign representatives from other groups within your business to ensure their voices are heard.
6. Be proactive throughout the implementation process. Set clear deadlines and ensure everyone has a clear set of learning/implementation tasks assigned to perform. Run weekly meetings with staff to ensure tasks are being followed, and deadlines are reached.
7. Schedule less frequent strategy meetings with management and the project leader to assess the overall progress of the implementation and adjust if necessary.
8. Don't wait for 100% perfection before you go live. You may invest in the best print management system in the world, but if your staff are resistant to change and refuse to use it, it just becomes a cost center with no positive impact on your business.

Tony Tarpey is the Chief Operating Officer at SmartSoft Inc., the company behind the award-winning Print MIS and Workflow Automation platform, PressWise. Designed by a printer, PressWise provides a cloud-based solution that includes unlimited web storefronts, estimating, order management, production automation, bulk mailing, shipping, and fulfillment, as well as integrations into most 3rd party web-to-print platforms. Contact Tony at [tonyt@smartsoftusa.com](mailto:tonyt@smartsoftusa.com).



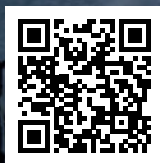
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