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UNIVERSAL PRINTING GETS GREENER WITH FUJIFILM

*North Carolina Printer Installs CTP Solutions with Processless Plates,
Expands Wide Format Capabilities*

Valhalla, N.Y., April 27, 2010 – “We were a green company before we even knew what being green meant,” says Don Bean, production manager of Universal Printing, located in Durham, N.C. “It’s not something we’re doing because it’s hip or trendy. It’s part of our business culture and has been since the doors opened more than 30 years ago.”

The company already boasts an aggressive recycling program for both aluminum and paper, uses ink that’s made of 100 percent linseed oil and has nearly eliminated VOCs in the pressroom. With its latest move, Universal Printing has overhauled its prepress department and has done away with plate processors and the chemicals that go along with them and reduced it’s water usage to zero.

Partnering with FUJIFILM Graphic Systems Division, Universal Printing installed a new 4-up Dart thermal platesetter and is now running Fujifilm’s Ecomaxx-T plates, the only truly processless plate available on the market today.

“We decided to get out of the chemical business altogether,” says Bean. “We just didn’t want to keep up – using and disposing of the chemicals, the extra water and electricity, as well as time spent maintaining the device. And, while we were using an eco-friendly plate previously, Fujifilm’s Ecomaxx-T offered us an even greener option and we didn’t have to make any compromises on the quality of our printing.”

Compatible with most thermal (830nm) platesetters and approved for 1% - 99% at 200 lpi conventional or 300 lpi hybrid and FM screenings, Fujifilm’s Ecomaxx-T processless thermal plate is a non-ablative plate that carries a latent image with distinct contrast allowing visual inspection after imaging. The Ecomaxx-T plate only needs imaging power of 120mJ/cm², resulting in the same plate production speeds as conventional thermal plates.

“I’ll admit that I was a little skeptical,” says Bean. “I didn’t have any experience with a plate that was processed on press, but I’ve been amazed.” He adds that they’ve noticed quite a change already. “It’s been outstanding. We’re able to print sharper dots and much sharper images.

“Add to that our GRACoL 7 certification and the change in our quality was even more dramatic. We were printing as well as possible, but these changes have allowed us to raise the bar even higher.”

A mid-sized printer with 35 employees, Universal Printing is the only printer of its size in North Carolina to earn the prestigious G7 Master Printer certification and the company credits the work done with Fujifilm’s Professional Services Group with helping them achieve and maintain better, consistent color.

In addition to raising the bar with platemaking, Universal Printing also made strides in proofing, installing an ORIS proofing solution.

“The new G7 standards, along with the fidelity of the plates, have made a big difference in our quality. We’ve been able to not only maintain color consistently, but also improve our color capabilities,” says Bean. “We know it’s not just the plates or the proofing; it’s a combination of all of the changes we’ve made.”

Universal Printing also installed a new Mutoh wide format device to enhance the company’s offerings in that arena. “We’d been doing wide format projects for clients, but it was more of an ancillary service for us,” says Bean. “With the new Mutoh eco-solvent device, wide format is an area that we’re planning on making a solid revenue generator and that’s something that’s definitely exciting for us.”

Universal installed a 64” ValueJet 1614, which is capable of printing at speeds up to 183 sq. ft. per hour in production mode and is flexible enough to suit a wide variety of jobs.

“In bringing in Fujifilm to help us with our G7 Master Printer certification, we’re able to match color across the board, including wide format, digital and press,” Bean says. “Now, even up close, the colors are consistent.”

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