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CONLIN'S DIGITAL PRINT & COPY CENTER

Toner's in Their Genes

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Ready to fulfill their clients' needs at Conlin's Digital Print & Copy Center's new King of Prussia, PA, location are, from the left, siblings Ann, Bill and Michael Conlin.

Conlin's now has more than 70 employees and boasts an equipment list that includes a Xerox iGen3 digital color production press; three Xerox DocuTechs; two Xerox DocuColor 6060s; two 2060s; one Canon CLC 5100; five Encad Novajet printers; and three Océ engineering printers.

The company installed the Xerox iGen3 digital production press at the Malvern location to grow its short-run color printing business and expand the company's services for customers in the advertising, legal, marketing communications and real estate industries.

"Conlin's does not say 'no' to a customer request, so we needed a machine that would help us deliver on that promise," notes Bill Conlin, president. "The iGen3 press allows us to produce a wider variety of applications, faster and with higher quality."

Recipe for Success

According to the Conlin's team, investing in equipment is only part of the company's formula for success. Family pride, attention to detail and streamlined workflow processes also help keep the copy center running smoothly and efficiently.

To drive its iGen3 press and make it easier to integrate into the shop's existing workflow, Conlin's uses a

THE LINE that separates quick copying's world from what has traditionally been the commercial printing industry's turf is beginning to blur.

Take, for instance, Conlin's Digital Print & Copy Center, which has been family owned and operated since it was established 25 years ago. With three Philadelphia-area locations—King of Prussia, Malvern and Horsham, PA—the company offers a bevy of services you would expect from an average copy shop.

This, however, is not your average copy shop. Conlin's Digital Print &

Copy Center also lists digital printing, optical disk storage for immediate print-on-demand or revisions, variable data printing, OCR scanning, CD/DVD duplication, wide-format printing, complete bindery services, mailing and fulfillment, and more in its lineup.

But the company came from humble beginnings.

"My father started the business in 1980 as a result of working for Xerox," says Ann Conlin, vice president of sales and marketing. "He decided to go on his own. He started with three employees and one (Xerox 6500) machine."

Xerox FreeFlow DocuSP print controller, as well as an EFI Fiery server—workstations that process print files and run the printer. DocuSP enables the company's operators to run jobs on multiple printers from one interface, reducing costs and maximizing productivity.

At the On Demand trade show in May, the company placed an order for a second iGen3, installed in September at Conlin's new 13,500-square-foot King of Prussia location. Conlin's also ordered two Xerox Nuvera digital copier/printers; a Xerox Nuvera digital production system; a Xerox 4110 digital copier/printer; and four components of the FreeFlow digital workflow collection. According to Conlin's executives, they made these investments to further automate their workflow processes and to improve the print quality they deliver to customers.

"All three stores are on the same platform, and we have a wide-area network and can send jobs to any of our locations," Bill Conlin explains. "We are connected and can route jobs to where a machine is available."

The company also offers online ordering via its Website, a service that has been dubbed Conlin's Extra. Customers can set up their own individual FTP site to send jobs right to Conlin's from their computer.

"There is a functionality to it that you can reorder, as well," notes Michael Conlin, secretary/treasurer. "If they need a job produced again next week, they just click again to reorder. When they do, it sends us an automatic e-mail with the order and a link to the file."

Conlin's Extra, which is not browser-specific, also generates a print history for customers. That way, the client can see when they last ordered a job and the quantity.

"Customers have told me that they really love this because previously they saved all their e-mails to know what they sent to Conlin's," Ann Conlin recounts. "Now they have an archive at their desktop."

Once Conlin's has a job in its possession, it has the capabilities to provide customers with a variety of options. Fulfillment has always been a part of Conlin's business, Bill Conlin points out—and should be—because it's a good value for customers.

"This is where Conlin's Extra comes in handy," Michael Conlin adds. "Clients who are conducting trade shows or training sessions around the country or around the world can simply order from their laptops. We fulfill it, ship it and they have it for their next session."

Digital printing makes these types of situations easier. Management feels more jobs are going the digital route, and customers who once swore by the quality of offset are confident with digital output.

"It might cost a little more to do a longer run on the iGen3 than it does offset, but if it is due tomorrow morning, offset won't get it done," Michael Conlin asserts.

It's a similar situation to what happened with black-and-white printing, the company's president contends.

"You used to have to print everything offset," Bill Conlin stresses.

"Then black-and-white digital presses became available. It just takes a little while for people to change their ordering habits."

As print buyers are becoming more understanding of the digital process, digital printing is gaining popularity, he continues. "You have a whole generation of buyers who don't have a loupe out," he observes. "For people who sit around at a press check and go to lunch—the party is over. You have to get projects completed quickly."

Conlin also reports seeing more jobs that were traditionally black-and-white going to color. This is especially true of manuals. Entire manuals that were formerly printed monochrome are being produced in color, as long as costs can be kept reasonable. This works perfectly for Conlin's sales staff.

"It's an advantage that our people don't know the offset world—they just know what we do," Bill Conlin confides. "In the same vein, traditional printers may have regular offset customers at their fingertips that can be led to drink from the digital trough."

Conlin's does a good deal of work for commercial printers, he adds. This comes back to the trust factor that customers have dealing with this family run business.

"Between the power that we have between the three stores and our equipment, we never have to say, 'oh, the machine is down,'" Bill Conlin concludes. "That's something you might hear at a smaller shop. People trust us to get it done—and we do whatever it takes to make sure it does." ■



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