

Reischling Press reinvents itself with HP Indigo Presses, HP Designjet Printers



“In this market, it’s all about innovation. Our HP Indigos and HP Designjets give us the flexibility, reliability and high quality we need to deliver the constantly evolving product lines our partners demand.”
–John Perez, CEO, Reischling Press, Inc., Tukwila, Wash.

HP customer case study: HP Indigo presses, HP Designjet printers support Reischling Press as fulfillment partner in high-volume B2C market

Industry: Digital printing fulfillment

Objective:

Expand capabilities in growing market for digital printing fulfillment

Approach:

Deploy fleet of HP Indigo press 5000s with Scalable RIP solution and HP Designjet Z6100 wide-format printers

IT improvements:

- Press reliability supports high-volume output
- Ease of maintenance ensures uninterrupted uptime
- Scalable RIP solution automates workflows
- Improved output quality satisfies partner demands

Business benefits:

- High-quality capabilities open photo-book market
- Press reliability, ease of use cut labor costs
- Output flexibility enables product innovation
- Enhanced capabilities spur and support business growth



Like many commercial print shops, Reischling Press, Inc. entered the 21st century facing shrinking margins and ferocious competition. In response, the company reinvented itself. RPI today is one of the largest U.S. providers of printing fulfillment and logistics for partners that provide online services to consumer customers. In this new market space, RPI for the past two years has experienced phenomenal growth—100 percent a year on average, with similar expectations for 2008. Underlying this extraordinary industry success is a large fleet of HP Indigo presses and HP Designjet Printers.

“What turned the tide toward HP was the HP Indigo Scalable RIP Solution. Its workflow automation greatly enhances the HP Indigo’s high-volume capabilities and gives us a platform on which we can depend.”

John Perez, CEO, Reischling Press, Inc., Tukwila, Wash.



“We run our HP presses around the clock for long periods of time,” says John Perez, CEO of RPI. “I tell HP, if anyone is going to break your equipment, we will break it, because compared to the average user we work it much harder. However, HP delivers it all—quality, durability and labor-saving ease of use. Without HP, we wouldn’t be able to provide the full range of high-quality, on-time services our partners demand.”

RPI runs 11 HP Indigo press 5000s and drives its print-production workflow with the HP Scalable RIP Solution digital front end on HP BladeSystems. For wide-format printing, RPI uses nine HP Designjet Z6100 Printers. The company’s print volume averages 8 million color pages a month, with heaviest loads during the peak November/December holiday season, when the company prints up to 20 million pages per month. For shop floor and office functions, RPI relies on HP Compaq Business Desktop PCs and HP LaserJet Printers.

The Indigo/Designjet advantage

RPI pioneered its entrée into the Internet print market in 1999, after 20 years as a traditional commercial printing company. Today as the manufacturing partner for web-based business-to-consumer services, RPI makes personalized, on-demand print products such as notepads, note cards, stickers and photo books. “We act as an integral part of our partners’ delivery value chain,” Perez explains. “The consumer orders from the

partner’s branded website, incorporating their own content into the product design. RPI fulfills and ships the order, though from the end customers’ perspective, it appears everything is handled by a single company.

RPI started with another manufacturer’s digital press, but soon went looking for higher-quality output and more-flexible press capabilities. That led to the HP Indigo. “What turned the tide toward HP was the SRS software,” says Perez. “We needed a rock-solid RIP solution that could scale with our increasing volumes. The HP Indigo Scalable RIP Solution’s high-performance processing and automated workflows made the HP Indigo a platform on which we could depend.”

Made for multi-press, high-volume, automated photo-specialty and book printing, the HP Indigo Scalable RIP Solution helps RPI meet demand during its peak season, when employment can jump from a slow-period need of 50 to as many as 225 employees working around the clock. The RIP solution provides auto-load balancing, centralizes workflow management and reports production status real-time to connected MIS systems. It’s the perfect complement to the Indigo press 5000, HP’s digital, full-color press combining offset quality with variable-data capabilities for economical short-run printing.

RPI uses its HP Indigos mostly for photo books. For book dust covers and posters, it uses the fast, high

quality HP Designjet Z6100 Printer. "None of the other vendors' printers could stand up to the volume the way the Designjets have. We had quality issues, we had reliability issues and we had throughput issues. Then we bought HP wide formats and ran them hard, printing up to 4,000 dust overs a day with no problem," Perez says, adding that by avoiding the need to reprint defective work, the HP Designjets have reduced waste to a minimum.

"HP is constantly evolving and improving its existing products, and bringing new products to market that help us do a quality job at a lower price for our customers."

John Perez, CEO, Reischling Press, Inc., Tukwila, Wash.

Both the Indigo and the Designjet use HP DreamColor Technologies to produce accurate color under fluctuating environmental conditions. "The issue of color management is a constant topic here," Perez says. "HP technologies help us keep output within customer color profiles across all the presses we run."

As RPI standardized on a broad-spectrum portfolio of HP solutions, it worked with HP Financial Services on coordinated, favorable lease financing. "HP listens, understands and responds," says Perez. "We were able to get the correct configuration for our unique needs, and we obtained the best prices under attractive financing terms."

The results: higher revenue, less cost, satisfied partners
Looking at the impact of HP solutions on RPI's business, Perez cites numerous critical benefits:

Increased business volume: The HP Indigo's unrivaled output quality was key to RPI growing its share of the

lucrative photo-book market. "The HP Indigo is the premier press for printing photo books; our partners specify they want Indigo quality," says Perez. "RPI's photo book business was up an average 125 percent across all customers in 2007 and in 2008 growth continues to be strong. Without the Indigos, we wouldn't have that increased business."

Decreased labor costs: The HP Indigo's ease of use has allowed RPI to arrange its Indigos into pods of four machines each, with a single senior printer running all four with just a few helpers. During the two-month peak season alone, Perez estimates this saves between \$30,000 and \$35,000 in labor costs. "We're able to use the highest-paid printers very effectively, given the Indigos' reliability and the way the console software works. It's a significant cost advantage."

Faster turnaround: HP is constantly improving its product performance as well as innovating new solutions, says Perez. For example, a recent software upgrade gives the Indigos perfect block coverage with less ink, eliminating the need to place heavily printed sheets on drying racks. "We take the pages off the Indigo press and process them immediately to the bindery. It shaves eight hours off our turn time, which is significant to us in both meeting deadlines and in the amount of work we can take on."

Easy maintenance/uninterrupted uptime: RPI elected to send its press people to HP Customer Care digital press person/shared maintenance training. The HP equipment runs so reliably that remedial maintenance is minimal, Perez says. When HP service people do visit the shop, they are invariably responsive and efficient. However, RPI's ability to self-maintain cuts costs and downtime.

Customer solution at a glance

Primary applications

Digitally printed products incorporating consumer-generated content

Primary hardware

- HP Indigo press 5000
- HP Designjet Z6100 Printer
- HP ProLiant DL380 Server
- HP ProLiant BL25p Server

Primary software

- HP Indigo Scalable RIP Solution
- HP Indigo Production Manager

HP Services

- HP Financial Services portfolio pricing
- HP Customer Care digital press person/shared maintenance training
- Flexible contracting for peak seasons



Next up: giant East Coast expansion

For RPI's partners, staying competitive requires constant product innovation to capture and keep the consumer market. The flexibility of HP presses and printers enables RPI to adapt with ease to these changing demands. For example, the company today is experimenting with the HP Indigo's ability to handle numerous substrates, including recycled and hinged paper stock.

"Our partners are constantly evolving the products they offer, either in form factors, color, types of substrates or covers being put on them," Perez says. "They're also going after niches, such as pro photographers, younger people and even scrapbookers. This challenges to us to make all these variations within our factory while maintaining the quality and the turn times. The HP equipment is what makes it possible."

So successful is RPI, in fact, that its biggest challenge these days isn't generating business—it is increasing capacity in a controlled way to meet exploding demand. The company recently doubled its Washington factory space to 30,000 square feet. A new East Coast facility slated to open within the next 18 months will add another 60,000 square feet—to be equipped with a whole new fleet of HP Indigo presses and HP Designjet printers.

"HP is dedicated to the space," Perez says. "Our partners feel confident about engaging with us in long-term relationships, because they understand that with HP behind us, we'll be able to meet their changing needs."

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