



Digital Print Q&A

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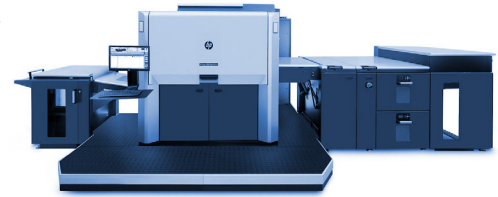
BR Printers - Digital Print Q&A

BR Printers is proud to have a team of print experts onboard. Their insights are a great resource for businesses and individuals involved with the print industry in any way. In this piece, our Chief Strategy officer and Senior Vice President, West, David Gall, dives into optimal printing jobs, quality levels, and the future of digital printing.

The Basics

Digital printing is a process whereby a digital image is transmitted from an electronic file to paper on a digital press, either in black and white or full color.

Digital presses work by applying an electrostatic charge to a piece of paper. Dry toner, either black and white or color, adheres to the charge. Typically, fuser oil is applied to the toner to fuse it to the paper. This technology has advanced greatly over the years to be faster, easier to use, and more accurate.



Q: What is the optimal printing job for digital printing?

A: Brutal question! While there are instances of obvious dominance (eg: variable data), the optimal job for digital printing is less about specifications/run size and more focused on the value proposition for the customer. Taking into account the challenges of forecasting demand, seasonality of product, supply chain cost, cost of delay, and time to market, the value proposition could dictate jobs previously thought exclusively as offset as the optimal digital job. Digital printing is the ultimate tool bridging the gap of uncertainty within today's world.

Q: When should I use digital printing versus traditional offset printing?

A: The old way of thinking would have static answers based upon unit price and the much discussed cross over point. However, I would contend that thinking in terms of exclusively one method or the other is not valid, and the true question is why aren't you developing your hybrid strategy in great detail? Offset still delivers the lowest piece price at large quantities, but the calculus of the true

cost of the units becomes less clear when transportation/storage/fulfillment are factored in (whether customer has the infrastructure or third party). Managing inventory has a cost as well, as does not being able to get customers what they want when they want it. Digital printing offers the ability to always have inventory, and it is best used in conjunction with offset to optimize the total value proposition and speed to market.

Q: What determines the quality level of a digitally printed piece?

A: The quality gap has narrowed such that the decision is of less importance today than it was even a few years ago. The decision comes down to customer preference and, ultimately, price.

Q: What do you believe the future of digital printing is?

A: The future will see digital printing expand to further become the chief tool against uncertainty and optimized supply chains.



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