Amey helps to create better places to live, work and travel, facilitated by the multi-roll, HP Designjet Z5400 PostScript® ePrinter

At a glance

Industry: Consulting, Asset Management, Engineering, Construction, GIS

Business name: Amey Plc

Headquarters: Oxford, UK

Website: amey.co.uk

Challenge

- Team of 90 designers demand productive and smooth workflow with minimal user intervention.

- Achieve photo quality output for posters, presentations, indoor signs and banners.

- Print superior quality A0/A1 engineering drawings. Fast processing and printing of even the most complex files on the office network, local USB drives and from remote locations.

Solution

- HP Designjet 44-in Z5400 PostScript® ePrinter with multi-roll capacity offering interruption-free, smart media switching for photo quality graphics and accurate engineering drawings.

- Six-ink system with high-volume cartridges, that include three shades of black HP Photo Inks, for unattended, accurate drawings and more efficient ink usage.

- HP Instant Printing PRO for productivity-enhancing print job management.

- HP Premium Instant-dry Satin Photo Paper for photo quality posters, presentations and banners.

- HP Adhesive Gloss Polypropylene for in-house creation of information and warning stickers.

- HP Bright White Inkjet Paper ensures high quality engineering drawings every print.

Results

- High photo-quality prints for posters, wall decorations, indoor health and safety signs and event banners, also thanks to three shades of black HP Photo Inks.

- A0/A1-size engineering drawings with sharper, neutral grey lines produced in under a minute, dry off the printer, are ready for construction site deadlines and customer meetings.

- Dual-roll capacity gives uninterrupted productivity for graphics and engineering drawings output, saving hours in a week and hundreds of metre of media in months.

- HP Instant Printing PRO's drag and drop file merging feature creates unique, application-free print jobs on the fly, saving time and optimising media usage to boost productivity.

- Built-in features such as driverless printing of PostScript files on a USB key or laptop, front panel previews and file management, speed up productivity and eliminate bottlenecks.

- HP large-format media achieves consistently reliable output for complete peace of mind in high pressure working environment.

> "Any delay can mean wasted time and money, and with all the workers and heavy machinery on a construction site even the shortest delay can be extremely costly. The HP Designjet Z5400ps ePrinter is just so much faster and easier to work with."

— Samuel Murray, highways projects civil engineer, Amey

Amey is a leading public service provider, working with public and regulated sector customers to help create better places to live, work and travel.

Amey is behind the services that people in the UK use every day – from roads, railways and schools to waste disposal, airports or the energy and water people use in their homes. With over 21,000 employees, operating over 320 contracts from 130 locations and 40 design offices, Amey has chosen HP as a key supplier for its unmatched experience in IT integration and services. When it was time for Amey to replace its large-format printer fleet, it turned to HP. In Sheffield, where Amey works in partnership with the City Council to manage and maintain the city's highway network, from design through to delivery, they chose the HP Designjet Z5400 PostScript® ePrinter, a 44-inch multi-roll printer with smart media switching and a six-ink system that includes three shades of black HP Photo Inks.

Amey has also been enjoying the HP Designjet Z5400 PostScript® ePrinter's ability to print A0/A1-size photo quality in-house posters, photos and signs for their office space, while delivering project-critical engineering drawings for the 90 designers that use the printer at the office or remotely, and as soon as they need them.

Miles Willmott, principal engineering manager at Amey in Sheffield, says: "We use HP media to ensure quality is guaranteed every time. I don't believe there are savings to be made by buying cheaper media when that can mean wasting time and paper because you have to reprint a job due to printing defects, like ink bleeding. Professional quality reinforces the high professional profile we want to give our company."

In-house photos, posters, and signs impress visitors to Amey

"We print 5 x 3ft banners illustrating our projects for tradeshows. We place them on banner stands placed either side of our display to attract visitors. Our clients and suppliers that visit our offices are impressed by the professional image quality of the photos and posters that decorate the office. We have decorated the reception area with a cityscape poster printed on HP Premium Instant-dry Satin Photo Paper. We also receive PDF files over the network directly to the printer from time to time – like health and safety posters or organisational charts – so all we need to do is hang them up," highlights Willmott. He is enjoying the high photo quality the printer delivers on in-house printed communications, ensuring colour reliability with HP Professional PANTONE® colour emulation and embedded Adobe® PostScript®/PDF.

"My next project is to print speed limit stickers on HP Adhesive Gloss Polypropylene for display on the back of our office pool cars," says Willmott.

On schedule and to budget with multi-roll and smart media switching

"The printer is always ready to go. There are between 80 and 90 designers in the office using the printer. Our head office occasionally sends communications graphics to the printer in PDF format, plus we have a street lighting projects team that print remotely over the network," says Samuel Murray, highways projects civil engineer at Amey. "With support for dual rolls there is no need to go to the printer to swap rolls. We can load media for printing graphics on one roll and media for engineering drawings on the other."

"There is always a roll of the right media on the printer. Getting drawings to our teams on site on time is absolutely vital, any delay can mean wasted time and money, and with all the workers and heavy machinery on a construction site even the shortest delay can be extremely costly. The HP Designjet Z5400ps ePrinter is just so much faster and easier to work with."

Amey also exploit the printer's multi-roll and smart media switching feature to load two different roll sizes in the printer when project deadlines are tight. "When we have a tight deadline for a project, we load A0-size media on one roll and A1 media on the other. You can print an A0 within a minute and it is dry straight off the printer. Now we can print drawings at the last minute, jump in the car and head off to the construction site. We produce about one hundred A0 prints in an average week, plus another twenty or so A1 drawings," Murray says.

Speeding up the design and review workflow

If designs are updated on site, or following a customer meeting, they can be loaded onto a USB drive, Murray can then come back to the office and simply print plans by inserting the USB drive into the printer. "I do one-off prints, normally PostScript files, from a USB flash drive about once a month," says Murray as he describes the time-saving flexibility this offers. "The printer automatically finds printable drawings on the USB key and using the touchscreen, I can preview the image, zoom in, make sure it's the one I want and print it. The printer can manage big files very easily and it eliminates bottlenecks if there problems on the network. A 300MB file used to take 20 minutes to print on our old printer. Now I don't need my computer or even the application. Interaction with the touchscreen front panel is what you would expect – it's great."

Another feature is offered by the HP Instant Printing PRO utility that comes with the printer, which allows Murray to merge files into a single print job. Murray can select two files that he wants to print, and without opening their native applications, simply drag and drop them into the HP Instant Printing PRO utility. Murray can then decide the area he wants to print, get a preview of the layout, and instantly print the files as a single job. This function saves time and optimises media usage.

Reducing costs and saving time by choosing HP

"We have saved at least 20 per cent in media costs thanks to the printer switching automatically between A0 and A1 rolls," Willmott says. "That's a saving of around 250m^2 of media in the last four months alone. But the ink system also seems a lot more efficient. Cartridges are three or four times larger than our previous printer and that adds to productivity by minimising printer downtime to change inks. In five months we haven't had to change the cartridges. Also the six-ink cartridge system is more efficient, with a pure grey ink cartridge, so we are using less ink than before to print similar drawings that represent 90 per cent of our output. The fact we get higher line accuracy and finer lines and defect-free prints is really important."

As Willmott concludes, "It's about achieving professional results all the time," and in its mission to help to create better places for people to live, work and travel, Amey has chosen HP printing technology to facilitate its mission.

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