



Copy General develops attractive reprographics pricing strategy thanks to cost savings and productivity gains

Copy General is the largest reprographics solution provider in the Czech Republic, offering customers in engineering, construction, real estate and architecture, printed color and black and white (B&W) document solutions. Founded in 1992, it employs 240 staff between two production sites, six retail outlets, and manages print services at a number of customer sites. Copy General is exploring business strategies to grow color printing and expand its B2B market with new applications.

Industry sector: Repro Houses and Copy Shops

Business name: Copy General

Headquarters: Czech Republic

Interviewees: Jan Halík, sales manager, Copy General

HP equipment: HP PageWide XL 8000 and XL 5000 Printer,
HP PageWide XL Folder, HP SmartStream software

Website: copygeneral.cz



Challenge

"We are targeting growing demand for color output to drive growth. Customers gain design time and achieve greater clarity and detail in color printed plans. By reducing costs and making gains in productivity for mixed black and white (B&W) and color projects, we can minimize the price differential, and offer customers a price point that boosts color demand while lifting our margins on B&W."

Jan Halik, sales manager, Copy General



Customers value the freedom to print B&W and color designs

Copy General's reprographics business has enjoyed regular volume growth over recent years but falling per square meter prices. Combined with growing demand for color output, it reassessed its reprographics workflow and production setup. "Our objective is to reduce the price differential between B&W and color, and accelerate the growing demand for color," explains Jan Halik, sales manager at Copy General. "Our customers want to focus on their designs, and not on line thickness or the colors that will render in B&W plans. With increasing use of Building Information Modelling (BIM), they need even more detail and clarity to reduce the risk of costly construction errors. With greater freedom to print color plans, customers can fully focus on design."

Copy General envisaged that a solution capable of seamlessly printing both B&W and color would reduce labor and equipment costs, while gains in productivity would deliver shorter turnarounds and increased volume capacity. "For a typical mixed B&W and color project, we would split B&W and color jobs between a B&W device or LED printer, and a color device. Using third-party reprographics software, we would check each file for errors, regularly checking with the customer. It was slow and time-consuming. Using different devices for B&W and color jobs, folded plans have to be collected from each device and collated manually. The combination of tools and production equipment increases the complexity," Halik explains. Copy General manages up to 70 projects per day with a 24-hour turnaround. Larger projects, typically between 300 and 500 plans, are turned around in 48 hours. B&W output represents 80 percent of its volume.

Solution

"Using HP SmartStream software we have a powerful engine driving production, with preprint processes 20 percent faster. The ability to send both B&W and color to the HP PageWide XL 8000 Printer and collect a whole project from a single inline folder has halved our production times."

Jan Halik, sales manager, Copy General



Accelerating the reprographics workflow by 50 percent

In late 2015 Copy General installed its first HP PageWide XL 8000 and XL 5000 Printers and the HP PageWide XL Folders, with HP SmartStream software for its two production facilities.

"Over a whole mixed B&W and color project, with the HP PageWide XL solution, we calculate a gain in time of about 50 percent. That's from simplifying the file preparation, powerful processing and fast printing, to reliable folding of plans ready to finish. We have accelerated every stage in production," says Halik.

Halik is able to breakdown the gains. "With HP SmartStream software, job preparation time is shorter by 20 percent. Customers send all sorts of file types with unexpected issues and errors, but operators no longer need to contact designers. The built-in Adobe® PDF engine can handle colors, page edges and fonts. Operators no longer need to separate B&W and color documents into two files for different devices. They are all printed on our HP PageWide XL printer and whole projects, mixed B&W and color, are ready to finish off a single folding device, saving us another 20 percent in time," Halik says.

Gains in overall efficiency, combined with the HP PageWide XL 8000 Printer's speed to print and productivity, has rendered Copy General's LED printer obsolete, as Halik explains: "Given the workflow and production efficiencies, our HP PageWide XL 8000 Printer not only gives us color and a much higher B&W quality than our LED printer, but costs and turnaround are comparable. We no longer need it."

Result

"Thanks to the HP PageWide XL 8000 Printer we have transformed tangible gains in efficiency in B&W and color production into an extremely attractive pricing plan for our larger accounts. Demand for color has increased by 20 percent and by offering a flat rate, we are achieving a higher price point for our higher volume B&W output too!"

Jan Halik, sales manager, Copy General



Building growth on increased productivity and versatility

"Since adopting the HP PageWide XL solution, and with our new price plan, color demand has increased by 20 percent. A customer recently ordered 500 plans in eighteen copies for the new waste water treatment plant in Prague. It chose to print the whole project in color," Halik states.

With black and white volume still representing close to 80 percent of business, Halik highlights how they have achieved revenue growth: "Our flat rate strategy has eliminated the price differential for larger accounts, relieving downward pressure on B&W, making it more lucrative. Cost savings and efficiency safeguard our margins. Our total volume has grown by 20 percent and we have reduced production staff by one member, from eight previously. We have calculated savings in labor costs are as high as 18 percent. Today we produce higher volumes with fewer staff, saving thousands of Euros every year."

Copy General is delivering on its objective to give customers greater freedom to choose color over B&W based on their design needs, and with another HP PageWide XL 8000 Printer on its way, Copy General plans to expand beyond its traditional market as the printer supports a wide range of paper, from roll-up banners, to plasticized papers and polypropylene substrates. "Thanks to the versatility of our HP PageWide XL printers, we are starting to explore opportunities in retail applications, such as short term POS flyers or instore banners for promotions, for example. We believe this is only the start of a trend in which color will play a major role in our reprographics business," concludes Halik.