

## Case study

# AGS expands its color business while improving print quality



HP PageWide XL printers have increased speed by 30% while HP SmartStream reduces preparation time by 50%

### Challenge

- AGS's old printers were becoming unreliable with breakdowns that could last days
- The company wanted to find a more reliable large-format color print platform

### Solution

- After careful research, AGS decided that the HP PageWide XL 8000 Printer best met its needs for speed, quality, and reliability
- It worked with local HP partner AXSA to install two printers

### Results

- Print speeds have increased by 30%, even in color
- Customers are impressed by the vibrancy of color prints, and AGS expects color output to double within a year
- HP SmartStream reduces manual preparation by 50%<sup>1</sup> freeing up resources
- HP PageWide XL High-capacity Stacker and multi-roll capability automate key processes and reduce need for manual intervention



**“The HP PageWide XL 8000 is a better overall solution for us because of its speed, efficiency and the fact that we do not have to correlate sets anymore; we print everything together. It is cost-effective too because the inks are priced in such a way that it saves us money.”**

– Jon Whitlock, print manager, American Graphix Solutions



When American Graphix Solutions' large-format printers began to breakdown for days at a time, the company knew it was time to look for an alternative. After comprehensive research, AGS purchased two HP PageWide XL 8000 Printers to enable it to increase productivity and make color more cost-effective. As a result, print speed has increased by 30%, preparation time has reduced by 50%<sup>1</sup> and color output is expected to double.

1. Using HP SmartStream software, job preparation and processing can be completed in 50% of the time. Conclusion based on an HP internal test measuring the time required to extract pages from a 50-page document and print them using several printers compared with using equivalent software programs.

“The great thing about HP SmartStream software is that we do not have to process our files; now we can simply drop the PDF files directly into the software, which saves us a lot of time. In the past, we would have to process the PDF files first, and then put them in to print them, but now that has disappeared, so it saves us a lot of time.”

– Jon Whitlock, print manager, American Graphix Solutions

**Industry:**  
Repro Houses & Copy Shops

**Company name:**  
American Graphix Solutions

**Location:**  
USA

**HP equipment:**  
2 x HP PageWide XL 8000 Printers  
HP PageWide XL High-capacity Stacker  
HP SmartStream software

**Website:**  
[americangraphixsolutions.com](http://americangraphixsolutions.com)



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## Challenge

### Replacing unreliable commercial printers

Originally founded in Orlando in 1973 by Eugene V. Coons, American Graphix Solutions (AGS) began as “Gene’s Blueprint Service”, designed to meet the needs of architects and contractors across the growing Central Florida region. In recent years, AGS has focused on implementing and perfecting the latest advancements in color printing and diversifying its portfolio of services. In 1998, the company moved into a large warehouse facility located in the heart of old Winter Park where it still resides today.

Architects, engineers and building contractors remain its principal customers, but it has also seen increasing interest in retail posters, and color is becoming more in demand on more affordable print mediums. However, the machines it used could no longer cope with the volume and could not provide the speed expected by customers.

“Printing color required manual page insertion which is time-consuming and prone to human error,” explains Jon Whitlock, print manager, American Graphix Solutions. “At the same time, the parts on our black and white wide-format printers were getting old and the printers could be down for days at a time. We cannot afford that amount of downtime so we wanted a more reliable solution that would also deliver speed and quality color.”

After CEO Tammy Smith viewed the HP PageWide XL 8000 Printer at a private show in Barcelona, AGS thought it had found the ideal answer to its requirements. Further research a year later convinced Whitlock and Smith that the new HP PageWide XL platform would provide the requisite speed, reliability, productivity and quality.

“It can run mixed color and mono jobs with an automated stacker as well as delivering the speed and quality you’d expect from HP so we decided to purchase two units,” adds Whitlock. “Compared with alternatives from other vendors, HP PageWide technology is far ahead.”

## Solution

### Speed, quality, and convenience

The HP PageWide XL 8000 Printer is a fast, large-format monochrome and color printer, with up to 50% savings in total production cost. HP SmartStream enables faster start-up and print speeds while the HP PageWide XL High-capacity Stacker and multi-roll functionality minimize the need for manual intervention. AGS worked with local HP partner, AXSA, which shipped and installed the new printers and now manages toner supplies.

“Our production manager rarely cracks a smile, but there was a lot of anticipation and excitement when these HP printers were installed,” says Smith. “The HP SmartStream software was easy to learn and allowed for simple data transition. We noted immediately that the software and printer would cut down times significantly,” states Whitlock.

The HP PageWide XL printers also print on a wide range of media up to 40”, giving AGS ultimate versatility in size and substrate.

At the same time, HP PageWide XL pigment ink provides dark blacks, vivid color, and moisture/fade resistance.

“The new machines really add a lot to our capability and what we can offer our customers. We can print small color logos without charging for a full page; the quality is superb which is important for customers submitting complex bids,” continues Whitlock. “We are currently producing around 200,000 square feet of print per machine per month, 10% of which is color. The new HP devices mean we can expand that volume considerably.”

## Results

### Versatility with added functionality

The HP PageWide XL printers have already exceeded expectations, particularly when it comes to speed and usability. AGS estimates that it can print in color 30% faster than the old devices could produce mono prints. Furthermore, HP SmartStream reduces job preparation time by up to 50%.

“With HP SmartStream we can drag and drop and move pages around much more easily and intuitively, which saves operator time and speeds print production,” remarks Whitlock. “The HP printers also don’t require stopping to clean and maintain during print runs, unlike other devices.”

The HP PageWide XL 8000 Printers have created extra capacity, meaning jobs that previously would have been turned down or delayed, can be accepted with enthusiasm. AGS has also created free color cover sheets to demonstrate the new quality with overwhelmingly positive results.

“By making color more affordable and impactful, we are expecting it to double to 20% in a year,” comments Whitlock. “Customers have been blown away by the vibrancy we can now deliver.”

Whitlock’s job has also been made much easier courtesy of the high-capacity stacker and multi-roll functionality. This enables each printer to automatically print mono and color and stack neatly without manual insertion while holding six different media rolls in four different sizes.

“There is no need to stop and manually swap out rolls so we can quickly change between 24” to 22” to 18”, for example, or switch between bonded paper, vellum and Mylar,” says Whitlock. “That saves time and reduces the need for a human operator overseeing production.”

Switching from one long-time print partner to a new one is not a decision AGS took lightly. However, it has been delighted with the results and there are clearly no regrets.

“We had been using our previous vendor for years so we approached this transition with trepidation,” concludes Whitlock. “Nevertheless, HP has delivered on everything we asked for and more. Now, we are just eager to see the next generation technology and new additional features.”

Learn more at  
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