

X-Rite eXact Auto-Scan Helps J&R Graphics Work “Faster, Better, Cheaper, Period.”



Industry:
Print and Mailing



Location:
Hanover, MA



Website:
www.jrgraphics.biz

About J&R Graphics

Located in Hanover, MA, J&R Graphics is dedicated to providing high quality print and graphic services. In 1974, Janet and Richard Fougere opened the shop with just an 1850 Multi-Press in a garage next to their home. Since then they have grown into a half-size shop, running a 20x26 6-color press with coater, a 2-color convertible perfecter, and three digital machines.

“You can’t put a price on the value of being able to achieve proper ink density, plus keep an eye on dot gain, LAB values, gray balance or trap. This speaks volumes about the value of the eXact Auto-Scan — a must-have device for any print shop with a multi-color press.”

**~ Rick Fougere, General Manager,
J&R Graphics**



Challenge

Costly make-ready – running about 600-800 sheets (900-1200 on the first job of the day) – was consuming J&R Graphics' profits.

1. The process of using their X-Rite 500 Series handheld densitometer was too slow to measure all of the targets in production.
2. Press operators focused on heavy ink coverage areas to determine ink key adjustments.
3. Adjustments were made manually on the press console.
4. Sheet flare, caused by too much water in light takeoff areas, caused problems in downline units.
5. Drying was slow and required excessive spray powder.

J&R Graphics knew they had the potential to triple their \$1 million in annual sales with the right color management tools.

Solution

J&R Graphics replaced their 500 Series densitometers with the X-Rite eXact Auto-Scan – a versatile scanning solution that can measure color with spot, manual, and automated scanning capabilities. They also added closed-loop software to automate the ink keys and achieve accurate and consistent color control.

Results

According to J&R Graphics GM Rick Fougere, “I did a monthly cost-savings analysis to show how we couldn't afford not to make the leap to presets and scanning technology.”

1. Press operator can scan full color bars in under 15 seconds.
2. Ink keys are adjusted automatically.
3. Ink key adjustments deliver superior color quality in half the time.
4. Make-ready sheets are reduced by 50% to 300 – 400 sheets. (600 – 700 on the first job of the day).

Although J&R Graphics knew the impact a scanning solution could make for ink density control, they weren't prepared for all of the other benefits they have achieved.

Proper Ink and Water Balance

Light coverage can lead to challenges establishing proper ink and water balance. Operators often focus their attention on the heaviest coverage areas. The eXact Auto-Scan reads the entire sheet and notifies the operator to adjust the ink keys for proper density and ink and water balance.

Better Drying and Less Offset

Running ink at the proper density with the least amount of ink film thickness provides more even drying and less offset. These benefits extend beyond the pressroom and into the bindery and mailroom. Since less spray powder is needed to prevent the offset, powder doesn't build up on folder rollers or in friction-fed direct-mail equipment.

An End-to-End Solution

J&R Graphics uses the eXact Auto-Scan along with other X-Rite spectrophotometers to accurately match color across digital and offset. According to Fougere, “The X-Rite eXact Auto-Scan isn't just a neat gadget for J&R's pressmen to play with; it produces better quality prints faster and cheaper with less headaches and stress. Our press operator can put the sheet on the eXact Auto-Scan console and measure. Getting to color quicker and holding it during the run, job after job, has made an amazing impact on press efficiency.”

The eXact Auto-Scan, an investment J&R cannot live without

Says Fougere, “These units are game changers in print shops. One bounced job, one re-run or do over can make a customer look elsewhere and with the turn times these days there is no time to fool around.”