

Printware

Two-Page CTP: The Quiet Revolution

Lieberman Printing

As Seen in:



Milwaukee-based Lieberman Printing viewed CTP as a way to upgrade its platemaking operation. The printer, with \$4 million in sales, installed **Printware's PlateStream** system this summer, and is now running three-quarters of its work direct-to-plate.

"With all the mistakes, dust, and scratches on our metal plates, we were always remaking plates, which created a bottleneck in the plateroom," says Lieberman plant manager Scott Axtman. "We were always holding up the presses, so we decided we had to move into the next century and go to CTP."

QUALITY BOOST

Axtman says the company—which prints two- and three-color jobs such as business forms, invoices, and envelopes—has witnessed an incredible boost in quality by producing a first-generation, digitally imaged plate. In addition, the removal of its conventional platemaking operation has allowed the company to increase turnaround times.

"We're skipping an entire operation and going right from copy prep to press," Axtman says. "And we can output a plate in four minutes instead of waiting a day for the plateroom to do it. As a result, our 10-day turnaround has been cut in half." Cost savings have been considerable as well, particularly because the polyester plates are half the price of the conventional metal plates the printer formerly used.

In addition, the company is saving money on eliminating film and the labor associated with producing it. In fact, Lieberman opts to run longer-run jobs on polyester by imaging two plates, which is still less expensive than outputting a single metal plate.

With almost all of its jobs already arriving in digital form, the transition to a digital workflow was smooth. Three months before installing the platesetter, the company purchased several Macintosh computers and hired a digitally oriented manager to prepare the files for platemaking.

Explains Axtman, "Once we accomplished that, we hit the ground running, and are now running most of our jobs direct-to-plate."