



IT and business services
QITS, an ADCO group company

IT-SPECIALIST QITS FUELS FUTURE GROWTH WITH INTELLIGENT PRODUCTION CONCEPT

Company Name: QITS, an ADCO group company

Industry: IT and business services

Founded: 1998, as a spin-off from parent company ADCO Holding

Location: Ratingen, Germany

Services: Transactional and omni-channel communication

Relationship with Canon: 1994

Objective

Meet increasingly complex customer requests for high quality individualised communication by expanding production capability, optimising efficiency and increasing flexibility.

Challenges

- Growing volume of individual short-run jobs with high level of emphasis on accuracy and security
- Demand for highest quality and colour precision, regardless of production technology
- Need for process optimisation from file to print to mailing, at high speed and with no errors

Approach

Complementing its existing inkjet solution, QITS integrated a new ColorStream 6500 Chroma continuous feed inkjet system and three imagePRESS C10000VP toner presses, linked by a PRISMAproduction workflow with a secure data feed from the QITS DataSafe®. Transition to virtualised PRISMAproduction environment.

Benefits

- Seamless, efficient, high-speed production with exceptional uptime
- Optimal flexibility to meet growing volumes of ultra-short runs
- Highest quality digital output of increasingly complex customer jobs

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Intelligent integration: data, production and individualisation

From state-of-the-art premises in Ratingen, QITS offers IT services, transactional document production and processing, and managed omni-channel communications. Clients are medium-sized enterprises including banks, property companies, insurance and energy providers, who choose QITS to support their digital transformation.

Over 20 years the company has earned an excellent market reputation as a leader in output management, production intelligence, business process outsourcing and handling highly sensitive and business-critical customer data.

Looking to the future, QITS philosophy is to integrate that data intelligently with production and individualisation to meet changing customer expectations.

The road to full digital colour

QITS already identified a shift in customer demands ten years ago. With communication moving to digital platforms, customers wanted print to deliver more impact, and to link analogue and digital communications channels. The logical step was to transition to high quality full colour production.

In 2010 QITS was about to invest in a new colour toner press to add to its mono line-up when revolutionary colour inkjet technologies started to hit the headlines. "Until this point we'd ruled inkjet out because of the investment level required and the quality of the printed output" explains Managing Director Oliver Winkelmann.

A preview of the ColorStream 3500 continuous inkjet press with pigmented inks changed that pre-conception.



"We really valued the collaboration with the Canon product team and how they took note of our specific requirements. The trust we developed was a strong foundation for our decision to invest with Canon."

Philipp Schneider
Project Manager

Won over by the print quality and the productivity implications, QITS analysed the potential of moving to white paper production. The decision was made to install its first ColorStream press in late 2011, a progressive move that gave QITS a clear competitive advantage.

"We always said we needed to offer digital quality that came very close to offset," reflects Oliver Winkelmann, "otherwise we would never make the switch successfully. It took time to tackle those reservations, but we believed in the technology, built additional expertise and worked hard to promote the benefits. Gradually we moved most work to full colour digital production."

"At some point, the debate was over. Quality stopped being an issue and our customers saw how they could optimise processes and eliminate offset pre-prints. By 2018, inkjet had become a quality standard, even for our large direct mail clients."

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1000 individual jobs a day, and growing

At the same time, QITS saw the need to optimise production in the face of the sustained trend to shorter runs.

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"We're not about mass production, we specialise in managing a high volume of smaller jobs. In a typical day we process more than 1000 individual orders from receipt of file, to production, to dispatch, and that number is increasing."

Oliver Winkelmann
Managing Director

Time to make the full switch to digital colour production, and to rethink the press line-up to add capacity and production flexibility. The decision was made to add a second continuous inkjet system, along with three new cutsheet digital colour presses to replace legacy systems.

Having considered various options, QITS came down in favour of Canon's single supplier solution. This centres on a new ColorStream 6500 Chroma continuous inkjet press with Chromera inkset (to run alongside the original ColorStream 3500), together with three imagePRESS C10000VP toner presses with PRISMAsync controllers. All four presses are linked using Canon's PRISMAproduction workflow management software. Five end-of-life VarioPrint 5160 mono systems were taken out of service, along with two digital presses from other suppliers.



"The systems are extremely stable and working very well. We expected it from the ColorStream based on our experience with the first system, but we've been very impressed by the reliability of the imagePRESS technology, particularly considering the high volumes we're putting through these presses"

Daniel Wyen
Production Manager

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Seamless, flexible, dependable

Expanding print production was part of a comprehensive investment programme including a new fully automated high speed mail inserting line, following an Industry 4.0 philosophy of end-to-end process optimisation.

The ColorStream and imagePRESS systems were up and running by June 2019, just 14 weeks after QITS confirmed its decision. "It was a very quick installation, with virtually no teething problems, and the entire line-up has been running superbly ever since," says Philipp Schneider.

Throughput of 40 million documents a year, equating to around 150 million pages, means that production uptime is mission-critical for QITS.

"Being able to link all our output with one software solution was decisive," Philipp Schneider continues. "Now we have just one data feed from our QITS DataSafe® to PRISMAproduction regardless of which press is being used. That would have been impossible with equipment from multiple vendors, using different spool systems and data formats. PRISMAproduction simplifies everything and eliminates the variables that complicate daily production."

Jobs can also be moved between presses without any colour management adjustments. The entire production workflow across all devices is certified to FOGRA Process Standard Digital, giving QITS absolute certainty of cross-device calibration, colour accuracy and consistency. "It's effectively a technical assurance for us and our customers that our blended inkjet and toner production concept really works, with no colour compromises."



"In Canon we've found a partner who totally understands our needs and can translate our needs into solutions. We've made a lot of changes and sustained investments to increase our capacity to meet increasingly complex customer demands. Now it's time to go and win new clients who can benefit from our best-in-class capabilities."

Oliver Winkelmann
Managing Director

"Our major challenge is to produce each individual job exactly according to the customer's instructions, at consistent quality, fast, and with absolute control over production and mailing," summarises Daniel Wyen. "The seamless production workflow we have now addresses all these demands and ramps up our productivity, because we have optimal flexibility and can process incoming data more quickly."

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