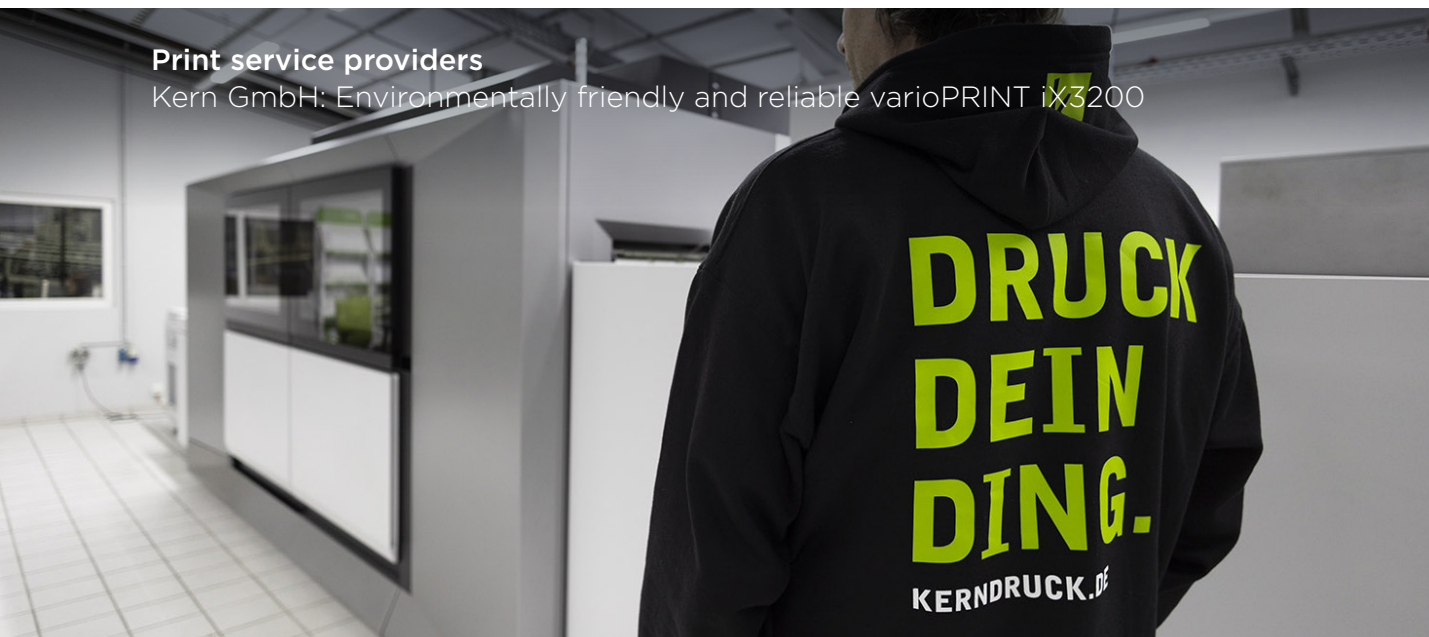


Print service providers

Kern GmbH: Environmentally friendly and reliable varioPRINT iX3200



THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR GROWING MARKETS

kern GmbH

Customer: Kern GmbH

Industry: Print service providers

Founded: 1862

Head office: Bexbach

Website: www.kern.gmbh

Kern GmbH in Bexbach, Germany, is a specialist in industrial printing with around 130 employees. The company offers all-encompassing services in this sector. In order to meet the growing demand for high-quality and environmentally friendly short runs, this sixth-generation company has successfully invested in inkjet printing using the Canon varioPRINT iX3200. The print quality is equivalent to offset and the paper is easier to de-ink for recycling.

Challenge

Kern GmbH is one of the major offset printing companies in Germany, with an output of around 60 million sheets per year. A variety of digital presses complement the overall technology portfolio and are chiefly used for made-to-order final production with pre-printed offset products. "The demand for customised short runs in offset quality is steadily rising. That's why we were looking for new technology, which could offer such quality. The same applies to environmental friendliness," says André Kern, who runs the Blue-Angel-certified company together with his brother. The production of inserts for individual products in short runs is becoming increasingly important for Kern, as is the case for furniture manufacturers and for everyday products such as kitchenware. "Our customers, and their end customers in turn, expect a high-quality look and feel akin to that of offset printing. For short runs, however, this cannot cover the costs of offset printing," explains André Kern. As an EMAS-certified print shop, Kern is experiencing high demand for environmentally friendly printed material. André Kern continues, "With the digital printing processes in use up to now, however, the problem remains that the ink applied cannot be easily removed from the paper for recycling purposes."

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Solution

"Because we look toward the future of various markets making use of the inkjet process, we explored what was on offer in this area for over two years before we eventually opted for the varioPRINT iX3200, as a result of very successful tests and trial prints," says André Kern. The decisive factor in his eyes was the compact A3 format in conjunction with the look and feel of offset. "During the test runs, which we were able to carry out at Canon's Customer Experience Center in Venlo, we noticed how easy it was for the operators to get to grips with this system. What's more, we haven't noticed any problems with paper conveyance, even with larger orders," explains the Managing Director. The implementation of the inkjet sheet-fed printing system from Canon was accomplished in a short period of time, including integration with the print production software used at Kern and setting up the necessary hot folders and colour profiles. Right away, this replaced three digital toner printing systems in use up to that point. "The productivity of the varioPRINT iX3200 meets our requirements perfectly. The system also offers a very high level of availability, and there is no downtime due to paper jams or technical faults," says André Kern with a sense of satisfaction.



André Kern (left) and **Holger Kern**,
Managing Directors, Kern GmbH

„“ We have entered a new dimension with the varioPRINT iX. It enables us to produce short runs, which are increasingly in demand from our customers, and in a quality comparable to offset. At the same time, we are taking the environment into account, as the demand for products with uncomplicated de-inkability is constantly on the rise. We will invest even more heavily in Canon's inkjet technology in the future.

Benefits

The decision in favour of the varioPRINT iX3200 has already paid off for Kern in just a short amount of time. Higher output, the look and feel of offset printing and improved finishing due to a reduction in static charge are the main benefits attained by the company. Areas of use include short-run catalogue production, books, mailings and flyers as well as pre-print runs. André Kern explains, "With this solution from Canon, we have achieved a real breakthrough. The comprehensive consultation and opportunity for extensive testing under live conditions, combined with the quality we need: Canon offers an overall package that is unparalleled on the market." At present, all short runs of up to 500 copies are produced in two shifts on the new system, but Kern also envisages expanding this in the future. "The system runs continuously and there are no unforeseen halts in production. Compare this with our toner systems, where a technician is needed every few days." As production now runs so smoothly, the acceptance of the varioPRINT iX3200 among employees is understandably high. André Kern sums it up: "Let's not forget that this system enables us to meet the demand for material printed in the most environmentally friendly way possible with regard to optimal de-inkability."

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