



Canon

RPI EUROPE

Discover how RPI Europe, a leading global provider of personalised photobooks and business collateral, enhanced its production capabilities with Canon's innovative sheetfed inkjet technology, achieving superior reliability, productivity, and consistent quality.



MASTERING ON-DEMAND PHOTOBOOK PRODUCTION AT SCALE

Over the years, RPI Europe has established itself as a leading global provider of personalised print solutions for B2C and B2B brands. Based in Eindhoven, The Netherlands, the company is part of RPI Print with four printing locations worldwide and more than 500 employees. RPI prints and ships more than 242 million unique items annually, focusing on high-volume personalised orders, such as photobooks of treasured memories and business collateral, including posters, flyers and business cards.

RPI Europe positions itself as a “flow company” rather than simply a print company, emphasizing the importance of continuous, consistent and efficient production processes that deliver high-quality personalised products at scale. Meanwhile, RPI Print operates both as a white-label provider for leading brands and through their e-commerce platform Blurb, where creators can design and order their own books.

The relationship between RPI Europe and Canon spans more than 25 years, beginning when RPI Europe (then operating as Paro Printing) first invested in Canon technology.

Based on this longstanding relationship and positive experiences with Canon equipment, including the sheetfed,

toner-based, monochrome VarioPrint 6000, as well as a Colorado large format printer, RPI Europe began evaluating Canon's latest generation of sheetfed inkjet technology. After extensive testing and analysis, RPI Europe invested in the varioPRINT iX3200 press first as a complementary technology and later as a replacement one.

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We like to position ourselves as a ‘flow’ company. Yes, we’re a printing company — but making a single book isn’t the challenge. Making one every day, every hour, every 30 seconds — that’s what sets us apart. And that’s only possible when you see the entire factory as one continuous flow.”

Paul Adriaans
General Manager, RPI Europe

ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES AND OVERCOMING CHALLENGES



Mastering seasonal peaks with scalable solutions

Facing a highly seasonal business with significant peaks around holidays and promotional periods, RPI Europe needed a solution that would enable the company to rapidly scale production up and down while maintaining consistent quality. The challenge was further complicated by labour market constraints, as finding operators with technical experience during peak periods became increasingly difficult.



Achieving long-term success with eco-conscious production

With sustainability becoming increasingly important to both RPI Europe and its customers, the company sought to reduce its environmental footprint without impacting production efficiency. RPI Europe's investment in the varioPRINT iX3200 has contributed to achieving that objective as the press has a low energy consumption per image while its water-based polymer pigment inks offer high deinkability, are free of hazardous ingredients and produce no ozone emissions.



Ensuring reliable operation with minimal intervention

A major challenge for RPI Europe was the need for continuous, reliable operation without constant operator intervention. Thanks to its high degree of automation, proven Canon inkjet technology with paper path intelligence and low maintenance requirements, the varioPRINT iX3200 offers unparalleled sheetfed productivity with an uptime of over 90%.

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We invested in the Canon varioPRINT iX3200 to address the challenges of the labour market. As our industry is peak-driven, we need to scale our workforce, but operators with technical experience are scarce, so a device that is low touch – we call it a 'green button' machine – and is easy to learn, provides RPI with significant benefits. The system also has additional advantages: it's fast, delivers the consistent quality our customers demand and requires minimal maintenance. All these features make it an excellent fit for our needs.”

Hanneke Boon
Operations Director, RPI Europe



MATCHING FLOW TECHNOLOGY TO FLOW PRODUCTION

RPI Europe's investment in the Canon varioPRINT iX3200 has revolutionised the company's production workflow, especially for its core photobook business. The press leverages iQuarius^{ix} technology to provide exceptional media flexibility and produces offset-like print quality at 1200 x 1200 dpi, resulting in photobooks with rich, intense colours and excellent detail reproduction, both critical factors for preserving customers' precious memories.

The varioPRINT iX3200 was seamlessly integrated into RPI Europe's production workflow, allowing for flexible planning and rapid responsiveness to fluctuating demand. As a true “green button machine,” the sheetfed inkjet press runs continuously with minimal operator intervention, enabling RPI Europe to produce one unique photobook after another with consistent, high quality. This reliability has helped to optimise how RPI Europe schedules and allocates work, especially during peak production periods.

The varioPRINT iX3200 is supplemented by a Canon Colorado 1.6m roll-to-roll, wide format printer, which is used for posters and other larger format applications. Together, these Canon solutions give RPI Europe the versatility to handle a wide range of applications and maintain their core focus on personalised photo books.

BENEFITS The decision by RPI Europe to invest in Canon inkjet technology has resulted in a number of substantial benefits:



Accelerating production and simplifying the workflow

The implementation of Canon's technology has significantly reduced production times and manual touchpoints, enabling faster delivery while ensuring that the print quality remains consistently high. And thanks to the productivity of the varioPRINT iX3200, RPI has been able to consolidate the production of multiple existing presses onto the single Canon press, simplifying the workflow. What's more, the press's ability to run continuously with minimal intervention has increased overall throughput and operational efficiency, especially during peak periods.



New levels of reliability and flexibility

The varioPRINT iX3200 has proven to be exceptionally reliable; what RPI calls a true "green button machine" that simply runs without constant monitoring or maintenance. This reliability, combined with the easy operation, has given RPI Europe the flexibility during peak periods to quickly train new operators who don't have extensive technical experience. That the press can print on over 1,000 approved coated, uncoated, and specialty substrates in flexible formats, ranging from 203x203mm to B3, ensures also printing as close to the final application as possible, reducing waste and manual steps.

"We plan the work we print on the varioPRINT iX3200 based on the volume that comes in. And since that can vary throughout the week, we do that on a daily basis. Things can change during the day, but the Canon press gives us the flexibility to deal with that too as we can easily decide to shift work away from the press or put more work on it."

Hanneke Boon, Operations Director, RPI Europe



Quality and consistency without compromise

The advanced technology in the varioPRINT iX3200 produces exceptional resolution and colour accuracy both on coated and uncoated papers and ensures that every photobook captures and reproduces customers' memories exactly as they expect. This consistency of print quality has, as a result, strengthened RPI Europe's reputation for premium photobooks. Global customers of the company can now also be confident of a consistent level of print quality worldwide as its US plants have also installed varioPRINT iX3200 presses.



Improved sustainability

With high deinkability, the water-based inks of the varioPRINT iX3200, along with format flexibility and reduced paper waste, have helped RPI Europe strengthen its sustainability credentials while also improving waste reduction in its production environment. In addition, the replacement of several previous digital devices with one varioPRINT iX3200 has resulted in a lower energy usage per page per production job.



Business growth facilitated by technology

The collaboration with Canon and its inkjet technologies has positioned RPI Europe for continued innovation and growth, ensuring they stay at the forefront of advances in printing technology.

"... varioPRINT iX3200 product development is not just about adding features, features, and more features. And in the case of the iX3200, as its development was very focused on productivity, quality and uptime, that's been really helpful for a flow company, such as ours"

Paul Adriaans, General Manager, RPI Europe



CREATING DURABLE SUCCESS TOGETHER

RPI Europe's partnership with Canon exemplifies how innovative technology can enhance a flow-oriented production philosophy. By investing in the varioPRINT iX3200, the company has enhanced its service capabilities, improved efficiency, and maintained its position as a leading provider of personalised photo products.

Looking to the future, RPI Europe continues to focus on "Creating Durable Success Together", supported by Canon's ongoing commitment to technological advancement and customer success. The company sees the future of print production in reliable, sustainable inkjet technology that supports its flow-based approach to creating unique, personalised products at scale.



RPI is known for high-quality standards. And we would never compromise on that, which is the same for the Canon varioPRINT iX3200, so we've been able to maintain those standards at the same level."

Hanneke Boon, Operations Director, RPI Europe



Canon technology at RPI Europe
varioPRINT iX3200 sheetfed inkjet
Colorado large format roll-to-roll
PRISMAproduction software

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