



Acorn Press Swindon Ltd. creates major new business opportunities with enhanced large format print capabilities



Investing in the RICOH Pro™ TF6251 with eco-friendly UV inks enables Acorn Press to diversify its services, improve profit margins, cut lead times, and deliver output with real visual impact.

COMPANY & CHALLENGE

Based in the United Kingdom, Acorn Press Swindon Ltd. provides offset, digital, and large format printing to commercial clients. Operating a state of the art fleet of devices, Acorn Press delivers a bespoke design and production service, offering everything from brochures, direct mail, and magazines to signage, posters, and stationery.

Since 1979, Acorn Press has been printing advertising and marketing materials for British businesses and public sector organisations. Following a recent management buyout, the company has looked to expand and diversify its offerings, with a greater focus on the large format print market.

Simon Evers, Managing Director, explains: "We saw an opportunity to reduce our reliance on the ultra-competitive offset market and move into an area with real growth potential. We were receiving more and more enquiries and requests for large format work, especially signage and display graphics. For example, we recently won a valuable contract with a major finance company to provide point of sale [POS] materials."



Previously, Acorn Press had one roll to roll large format device for producing output such as posters and pop-up display boards. However, the company lacked the capacity and functionality to print some in-demand items, such as fluted board and foam board panels. Instead, Acorn Press outsourced this work — as well as production of the POS materials — to third party printers. Not only did this model incur significant costs, it also led to longer lead times for clients and meant the company had less control over output quality.

SOLUTION

After assessing several large format print vendors, Acorn Press engaged Ricoh to support its diversification efforts. Ricoh provided an initial consultation to discuss requirements, then designed a tailored solution based on the RICOH Pro TF6251 printer, with UV inks. The Ricoh team installed the state of the art flatbed device at the Acorn Press production site in just five days, initially supplied two days of training, and then provided more advanced, tailored training for specific applications.

Simon Evers explains: “Having used their digital sheetfed devices, we knew that Ricoh offered great quality solutions and post-sales



To improve our profit margins and client experience, we decided to bring as much production as possible back in house. We wanted to capitalise on the surge in demand, so we looked to enhance our large format capabilities to enable high speed printing on a wider range of substrates.

*Simon Evers,
Managing Director*



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Simon Evers, Managing Director



support. We selected the Pro TF6251 for its high speeds, cost effectiveness, white ink capabilities, and the integrated roll to roll option. When we produced some sample POS work for our finance client, the quality exceeded that of the output of our previous provider."

The Pro TF6251 gives Acorn Press both flatbed and roll to roll production capabilities for printing onto rigid and flexible substrates, which would normally require the purchase and maintenance of two separate devices. The company can use the new digital printer to print in traditional four colour CMYK mode, and use primer, white, and clear inks to add varnishes and create striking visual effects.

Alongside the Ricoh device, Acorn Press installed a Vivid VeloBlade flatbed CNC router and cutting table to create an integrated production workflow. As soon as large format materials are printed, an operator simply moves them to the cutting table to prepare finished items such as banners, posters, and kiss cut stickers.

Simon Evers adds: "We are using the Pro TF6251 on a single day shift schedule, and it's in constant operation. For our team, the printer is really easy to use: once they have started the print run, they can step away to manage another job or to prepare the finishing device — increasing overall production efficiency."

Acorn Press can call on Ricoh at any time to provide support, and purchase resupplies of UV inks and other consumables via the Ricoh eShop. The company simply logs on to the user friendly ecommerce portal to place orders, without having to phone, email, or complete paper forms.

BENEFITS

The investment in the Pro TF6251 from Ricoh has had a hugely positive impact at Acorn Press. The company can now handle previously outsourced large format print work in house, improving its profit margins and ensuring greater visibility and control over the production process. Ricoh's advanced printhead technologies and fast-curing UV inks also ensure exceptional output quality and productivity levels.

Simon Evers comments: "The high print speeds of the Pro TF6251 mean that we have improved our turnaround times, and can offer same day delivery for some large format jobs. That has a positive impact on client satisfaction and will ultimately help us to win more repeat business."

With the Ricoh system, Acorn Press can now offer a wider portfolio of applications to prospective clients, and cross-sell large format services to existing clients to drive more revenues.

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Simon Evers, Managing Director

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Among the work produced on the Pro TF6251 are fluted boards for property agents; printed signage on 3mm, 5mm, and 10mm foam board; acrylic and aluminium dibond materials; and POS strut cards on rigid display boards.

Simon Evers adds: “The roll to roll option means we can print so many new applications, including floor graphics, wallpapers, and window displays on ultra-clear vinyl. There seems no limit to the POS items we can produce, and we can now offer signage and other large format work to clients alongside our offset and digital print work. Since installing the Pro TF6251, we have generated huge demand for all sorts of large format work; it has certainly opened new avenues and helped us to secure significant new contracts.”

In addition, the Ricoh solution helps Acorn Press achieve high sustainability and energy efficiency standards. With low chemical emissions, the eco-friendly Ricoh UV ink

formulations carry a Greenguard certification, while the use of LED bulbs to cure the inks helps to limit power consumption and reduce environmental impact.

Simon Evers concludes: “Ricoh is a great partner to Acorn Press, and the Pro TF6251 has been a superb investment that we have been pleased to showcase on our social media channels. Since introducing the Ricoh printer, we have become a more productive and more profitable business, offering new services to clients with improved sustainability — a great result.”

ABOUT RICOH

Ricoh is empowering digital workplaces using innovative technologies and services that enable individuals to work smarter from anywhere. With cultivated knowledge and organisational capabilities nurtured over its 85 year history, Ricoh is a leading provider of digital services, information management, and print and imaging solutions designed to support digital transformation and optimise business performance.

Headquartered in Tokyo, Ricoh Group has major operations throughout the world and its products and services now reach customers in approximately 200 countries and regions. In the financial year ended March 2022, Ricoh Group had worldwide sales of 1,758 billion yen (approx. 14.5 billion USD).

For further information, please visit www.ricoh-europe.com

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