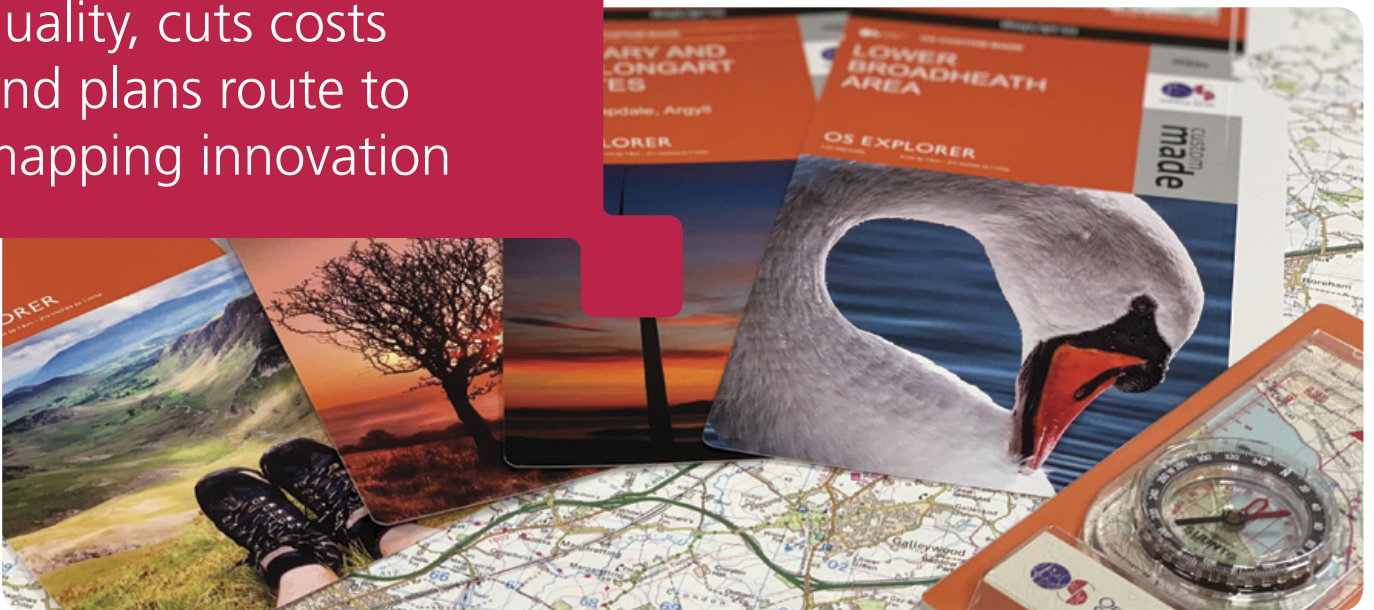


Case Study

Dennis Maps
Production Print
Map printing

Dennis Maps and Ricoh partnership improves quality, cuts costs and plans route to mapping innovation



When Dennis Maps, the UK's leading map printer, started using a Ricoh digital press it enabled the business to improve quality, streamline operations and reduce costs. But it was also the start of a partnership that the business

sees getting stronger as it calls on Ricoh expertise to help develop more innovation in printed map products in the future.

Executive summary

Name: Dennis Maps
Location: Frome, Somerset
Size: 30 staff
Activity: Specialist map printing

Challenges

- Unique and demanding print requirement
- Old technology and manual, time-consuming processes

Solution

- Ricoh production print expertise
- Ricoh digital colour press
- Ricoh pre, post and ongoing partnership

Benefits

- Helps produce high-quality, individualised mapping products
- Replaces slow manual processes with automation
- Delivers digital print indistinct from litho
- Saves time and money
- Establishes solid partnership to develop future product innovation

Challenges

Dennis Maps is the leading map printer in the UK, producing more than two million maps and charts every year. Its customers include the British Geological Survey, British Antarctic Survey, and land and registry bodies in the UK and Ireland. Ordnance Survey (OS), the biggest customer, is also part owner along with the Estate of Felix Dennis, a former magazine publisher.

Because of the unique and highly specialised nature of Dennis Maps' print requirements - such as printing one-off personalised maps - it must ensure it has the highest quality and best-fit printing technology.

Initially, Dennis Maps was looking to replace one of its key operation digital print devices that had reached end of life. But as it investigated modern digital print technology further, the company saw an opportunity to improve and streamline some business processes that were manual and labour-intensive.

Dennis Maps undertook an extensive review and selection process with a shortlist of leading printer manufacturers. It involved several meetings and some initial print tests, followed up by much more detailed and demanding print trials.

Steve Burry, Managing Director, Dennis Maps, says, "We have some complex and demanding colour profiling requirements. But from the start it was obvious that the Ricoh print quality was extremely good which was a major, if not, the determining factor for us. Detailed testing and a final demonstration at Ricoh's Customer Experience Centre in Telford convinced us that not only was the equipment right, Ricoh was also the preferred partner. The team was very professional, and it was striking the amount of time Ricoh took to understand our business needs, long before any sales discussion."



Solution

Dennis Maps has installed a Ricoh Pro C7200 digital colour press as part of its map printing solution. The Ricoh press is used predominantly for two specific mapping products. The main one is an OS product called Custom Made. This is a highly customised, print-on-demand service with a typical print run of one. An individual can order an OS map of any location, such as a favourite walk, get a map of the area and have a map cover with personalised text and images. The map is produced on special map-printing technology, but the cover which incorporates variable data is printed on the Ricoh press.

The other main application is another OS product called Active which is a heavy-duty, durable laminated map for use out in all weathers. Previously, the covers for these maps were volume printed on a litho press and then customised using adhesive branding stickers prior to lamination. Now the map covers and branding are printed using the Ricoh press.

Dennis Maps was struck by Ricoh's deployment process comprising a pre-installation survey, device set up and test, and training. Burry says, "Training was very thorough, and it was impressive that the Ricoh production print consultant who was there at the start and throughout the whole evaluation process was the same person that did the training. We felt we were in good hands rather than being passed from one person to another. Having someone you know and respect from start to finish re-confirmed our confidence in the Ricoh partnership."

Benefits

Dennis Maps' new Ricoh press has helped to improve operational processes, save time and money and is expected to deliver a good return on investment. But the most important benefit of the Ricoh technology is the quality of print.

Burry says, "The key criteria in selecting a new printer was will it be indiscernible from litho-print. The Ricoh press and its expertise has moved Dennis Maps to a point where most people will never know which is litho-printed and which is digital. It's that close and it means that we can mix and match the best print technologies to produce high-quality, seamless and uniform products. This is mission critical for our business and why it was essential to choose the right technology and the right partner."

Using the Ricoh press to replace what used to be a manual process has speeded up production of the Active product and has reduced labour. Being able to print the Active product branding onto a map cover, instead of using sticky labels has produced a cleaner, better-quality product.

continued overleaf

Case Study Dennis Maps

It has also helped to reduce waste since Active map covers can now be printed to order instead of overprinting in batches to maintain stock levels. Reducing waste as well as low power consumption of the Ricoh technology and a reduction in litho printing supports Dennis Maps' environmental aspirations.

Partnership was a significant factor in Dennis Maps deciding to use Ricoh technology. Burry says, "The partnership and collaborative approach with Ricoh has continued since equipment installation and that is something of significance. It wasn't just a case of here's the machine and maybe we'll see you in a few years' time, it has remained and is something we see increasing as time progresses."

Dennis Maps sees its partnership with Ricoh as a journey to future development and innovation. Burry says, "Our view is that over time map printing will become more a print-on-

demand model, offering consumers a higher degree of personalisation. This could include things like, highlighting landmarks or a preferred route and maybe even incorporating augmented reality. That will require us to re-model and transform our approach to production. A key factor for us was engaging with a company that we felt would be the ideal partner for us on that journey and we believe we have found that in Ricoh."

Ricoh Solution/Products

- Ricoh Pro C7200
- Ricoh digital production print technology
- Ricoh digital print expertise
- Ricoh long-term partnership

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