

## Case Study

XIC  
Commercial printer  
Commercial & Industrial Print

# Scottish printer transforms its business with innovative digital print technology



Prospects for XIC, an Aberdeen-based creative printer, looked challenging when the region's oil and gas industry contracted. But not to be defeated, the business set about transforming itself and its service offering.

XIC is developing new markets, enhancing its creative and innovative services and is on course to regain its market-leading position with the help of Ricoh Commercial & Industrial Print technology and industry expertise.

## Executive summary

**Name:** XIC  
**Location:** Aberdeen, Scotland  
**Size:** 19 staff  
**Activity:** Commercial printer

### Challenges

- Business impact of the oil and gas industry contraction
- Increasing demand for high-quality, versatile digital print capabilities
- Current equipment not meeting market challenges

### Solution

- Ricoh digital print and sign and display technology
- Ricoh consultancy and market expertise

### Benefits

- Challenges market downturn, delivers differentiation and competitive advantage
- Opens new markets, expands product and service portfolio
- Customer satisfaction up through increased quality, capacity and fast job turnaround
- Broadens range and scope of digital print services
- Extends service offering into sign and display markets
- Quality of Ricoh service and digital print technology seen as 'fantastic'

### Challenges

XIC is an Aberdeen-based creative print provider set up in 1986, that provides a range of creative design, marketing and print services to businesses and organisations locally and, increasingly, across Scotland.

XIC has been under a number of business challenges over the last few years. The most significant, has been the downturn in Aberdeen's oil and gas industry which hit many businesses in the area. Alongside this is increasing competition and a shift in demand from traditional lithography (litho) to digital print which has driven XIC to diversify its business offering. Having already made a significant investment in digital print technology, the company's strategy going forward is to offer a broader range of print and creative services and differentiate itself from competitors.

But when the contract on the company's existing digital printers was up for renewal, it marked a significant and dramatic change for XIC.

"We had no particular appetite for change, in fact we have an excellent relationship with our existing supplier. Nonetheless, for due diligence and market comparison, we did review other suppliers and products," says Murray Alexander, Managing Director at XIC. "What attracted us to Ricoh wasn't just the quality of its digital technology, it was Ricoh's understanding of the market and the pressures we faced. Ricoh has a very good grasp of the demands and needs of production print and the commercial print sector. What Ricoh offered fitted our vision and promised to address a lot of challenges we faced, and we felt that, compared to our existing provider, the whole Ricoh package would deliver more value overall."



### Solution

Despite using its incumbent supplier's equipment for many years, XIC has deployed a Ricoh digital print solution comprising a series of Ricoh colour and mono digital printing presses. These include Ricoh's top-of-the-range Pro C series and Ricoh's wide-format printing technology, as well as workflow productivity software. Murray Alexander says, "We went to the factory to see the Ricoh equipment in action and the confidence was instantly there particularly because of equipment build quality as well as the whole service offering."

One of the most important elements of the solution is Ricoh support and maintenance which includes an onsite, four-hour response SLA. The critical element of the service is Ricoh's UK-wide engineer network which means that XIC has fast access to production print experts on its doorstep in Aberdeen.

Murray Alexander says, "A vast amount of our work is same day or next and is deadline driven, so equipment up time is absolutely critical. Tenders, for example, are very time-critical, but it can be any job across the board; work that needs to go on a boat to a rig or flown to locations around the world. We must have maximum up time on our digital print equipment, so the local service from Ricoh is vital. So far, the Ricoh service has been fantastic, but the equipment is so reliable we haven't actually had to use it much."

### Benefits

"Ricoh's digital print technology is massively important for XIC. Several market challenges have made it harder and harder to differentiate our business from the competition. When we moved to Ricoh we took a little jump ahead in the market. We have been able to build a solid digital print capability which the Ricoh solution has only helped to reinforce. We've found that with the Ricoh digital print technology there is such a huge amount we can do that we couldn't always do before," says Murray Alexander.

There are several areas, such as improving the quality, capacity and speed of production, where the Ricoh technology has benefited XIC and enabled it to develop new products and services. However, for XIC one of the standout features is the ability to handle a broad range of paper stock and substrates.

Murray Alexander says, "When we started to investigate the Ricoh technology and saw the flexibility to feed envelopes, handle large sheet sizes and weights, as well as the substrate variation, we just felt the Ricoh equipment was very robust, particularly for more complex jobs. The Pro C equipment seems to be able to print on just about anything, whether it's different types of paper stock, textured surfaces or plastics."

*continued overleaf*

## Case Study XIC

XIC is also moving some of its high-volume production print that used to be done on litho over to the Ricoh presses. For example, it is using Ricoh to print envelopes for its mailroom service and adding value to customers by incorporating full colour and variable data printing. Ricoh's latex graphic wide-format device has helped XIC open up new opportunities like print work for the outdoor sign and display market.

The quality and capability of the Ricoh presses has also enabled XIC to cut significantly the amount of work it outsources to other printers which reduces costs, improves quality control and increases speed of service.

XIC also praised Ricoh's support infrastructure and industry expertise. Murray Alexander, "We were impressed by the Ricoh people, especially the production and digital print experts and the R&D capability in the UK. We are always challenging our suppliers and their technology to support us

in adding value, differentiating our products and services and bringing something new to our clients. With Ricoh, we feel that a lot of service development had already been done for us. It hasn't just been the quality and very capable devices, we feel we've taken quite a leap overnight, just by embracing some of the things Ricoh is putting forward."

### Ricoh Solution/Products

- Ricoh commercial print consultancy
- Ricoh digital print technology
  - Pro C9100
  - Pro C7100
  - Pro C901
  - Pro C8120
  - Pro L4160
- Fiery® Digital Print Server software

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Murray Alexander, Managing Director, XIC

