

Korea Studies Information boosts its publishing and print on demand services with HP Indigo Digital Presses



AT A GLANCE

Industry: Publishing
Business name: Korea Studies Information Co., Ltd.
Headquarters: Paju Book City, Gyeonggi-do
Website: www.kstudy.com



CHALLENGE

- Anticipating an acceleration of digitalisation and a reduction in demand for paper books, Korea Studies Information Co., Ltd (KSI) identified the need to transition from offset printing to digital without compromising quality.
- KSI also needed a solution that would reduce excess stock and allow for small-volume printing.
- To improve productivity and profitability KSI is always striving to become more efficient in order to compete effectively in a competitive market.

SOLUTION

- The company added an HP Indigo W7200 Digital Press and an HP Indigo 7500 Digital Press with HP SmartStream Production Pro for fast-turnaround, to further enhance its strong print on demand service capabilities.

RESULTS

- KSI has doubled its print output, partly thanks to the increased productivity of the new Indigo presses, resulting in increased profits.
- The ability to print in more flexible volumes allows KSI to deliver a broader range of services while enjoying the finest print quality.
- The Indigo W7200 Digital Press can print four times faster than the previous model – delivering up to 14,400 pages in colour and 57,600 pages in black and white every hour – enabling KSI to produce more books, more quickly.
- Thirty per cent improvement in colour fidelity ensures output is indistinguishable from traditional offset printing.
- KSI is enjoying reduced costs due to the continual feed rapid printing technology which requires fewer manual operators.
- KSI has minimised paper waste because the HP Indigo W7200 Digital Press employs rotation technology for maximum efficiency.

“The core strength of our print on demand business is no inventory overrun. Thanks to HP Indigo, we have been running our publishing business with no overrun for five years, even though we publish about 600 new titles each year.”

— Chae Jong Jun, president, KSI



Korea Studies Information Co., Ltd. (KSI), with more than 300 employees in Korea and China, has been providing academic organisations with a digitised service since the early 1990s, building up a database of about 14 million pages of scholarly journals. Since 2004, the company has also become involved in the publishing business, producing more than 500 titles every year. KSI processes customised short-run production orders and large-volume production orders using a combination of HP Indigo Digital technology and offset printing.

The evolving print industry

With the acceleration of digitisation and the increasing popularity of eBooks, KSI expects that the majority of books will soon be digitised and the demand for paper books will gradually and naturally decline. As a result, it makes less sense for the company to maintain its current offset printing and distribution system. In anticipation of this trend, KSI is investing in new digital printing capabilities to open new opportunities for customised and personalised printing in smaller quantities.

“Already, not only in Korea, but in Europe, America and many other countries as well, publication volumes have been decreasing,” explains Chae Jong Jun, president, KSI. “They will continue to decline, and in that case, the print industry is bound to switch from the pre-existing offset market to digital printing platforms. Having forecast that future, we have been preparing for it for 12 years, and now we are at the forefront of it.”

In previous years, KSI had invested in nine different HP Indigo Digital Presses so it could offer reasonable prices for short-run production and provide mass customisation and short delivery time. It was a natural choice therefore for the company to work with HP when it came to further extending its digital print capabilities.

HP Indigo W7200 Digital Press quadruples productivity

In 2011, KSI added an HP Indigo W7200 Digital Press and HP Indigo 7500 Digital Press to further enhance KSI's strong print on demand (POD) service capabilities and prepare the company for further growth.

“Indigo's biggest advantage is that right now, digital printers are at a cross-road,” adds Chae. “On one hand, there are systems that use toners; on the other there are systems that use liquid inks such as Indigo. The Indigo's use of ink allows us to reproduce the traditional printing method more accurately and with excellent quality and so is best suited to our needs.”

The new Indigo digital presses are delivering improved print quality and increased productivity. Accordingly, the cost of labour associated with hiring operators has been dramatically reduced.

“The production output of the HP Indigo W7200 Digital Press matches that of four HP Indigo press 5500 machines. The W7200, for example, can print in an hour, 14,400 pages in colour and 57,600 pages in black and white. With this increased productivity, the use of continuous feed over per-page has come to cost less. Therefore the print cost, which is the most important factor in printing, has decreased,” explains Chae. “And with the improved productivity, the expense spent on operators has been reduced by a significant amount.”

New solution is more sustainable

The increase in productivity and smarter use of paper is also helping KSI become more environmentally responsible – as is the nature of the POD business model.

“In the relationship between the printing industry and the environment, paper is the asset most massively used. The Indigo W7200 is very sustainable in terms of cutting paper consumption. The typical per-page feed tends to have high paper loss value, but since the Indigo W7200 employs rotation technology, it minimises paper loss,” adds Chae. “POD also makes positive contributions to the environment. The typical publishing business results in large volumes of waste inventory, but POD allows us to print only exactly what we need so that is environmentally responsible.”

Best print quality and increased flexibility

The HP Indigo W7200 Digital Press is also providing even better print quality compared to the previous presses, allowing KSI to deliver the best service – even at higher volumes.

“In terms of image quality, it has changed from the previous printing technology of applying CMYK inks separately to applying them in one shot, allowing for clearer print quality,” explains Park Young Won, director, Digital Printing Department, KSI. “For example, if you compare a previously printed booklet with one printed using the W7200, you will see that there's about 30 per cent improvement in colour definition.”

Colour quality is particularly important for certain titles as KSI publishes more consumer-oriented books in addition to academic material.

“Thus far, we have published about 6,000 titles and have distributed them through libraries and bookstores in Korea. Recently, we published a Korean cookbook using the Indigo W7200 model. Published for multicultural housewives living in Korea, this book presents Korea's selection of daily dishes and describes the recipes in five different languages,” adds Park. “As the book showcases many dishes, colour quality was of utmost importance. The production schedule was also under a tight deadline, so rapid printing was essential.”

The new Indigo Presses have also allowed KSI to schedule print runs of more than 500 which was previously not viable, enabling the company to bring in new business opportunities.

“With the installation of the Indigo W7200 and the Indigo 7500, we have become able to print not just 500 copies but even over 1,000 copies. Going forward, I predict it will even become possible to print over 2,000 copies using these models,” concludes Park. “As a result, the print volume at Korea Studies Information Co., doubled in 2011 compared to the previous year. With this doubling, the productivity also improved. And with the improvement in productivity, the profitability has also increased.”



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